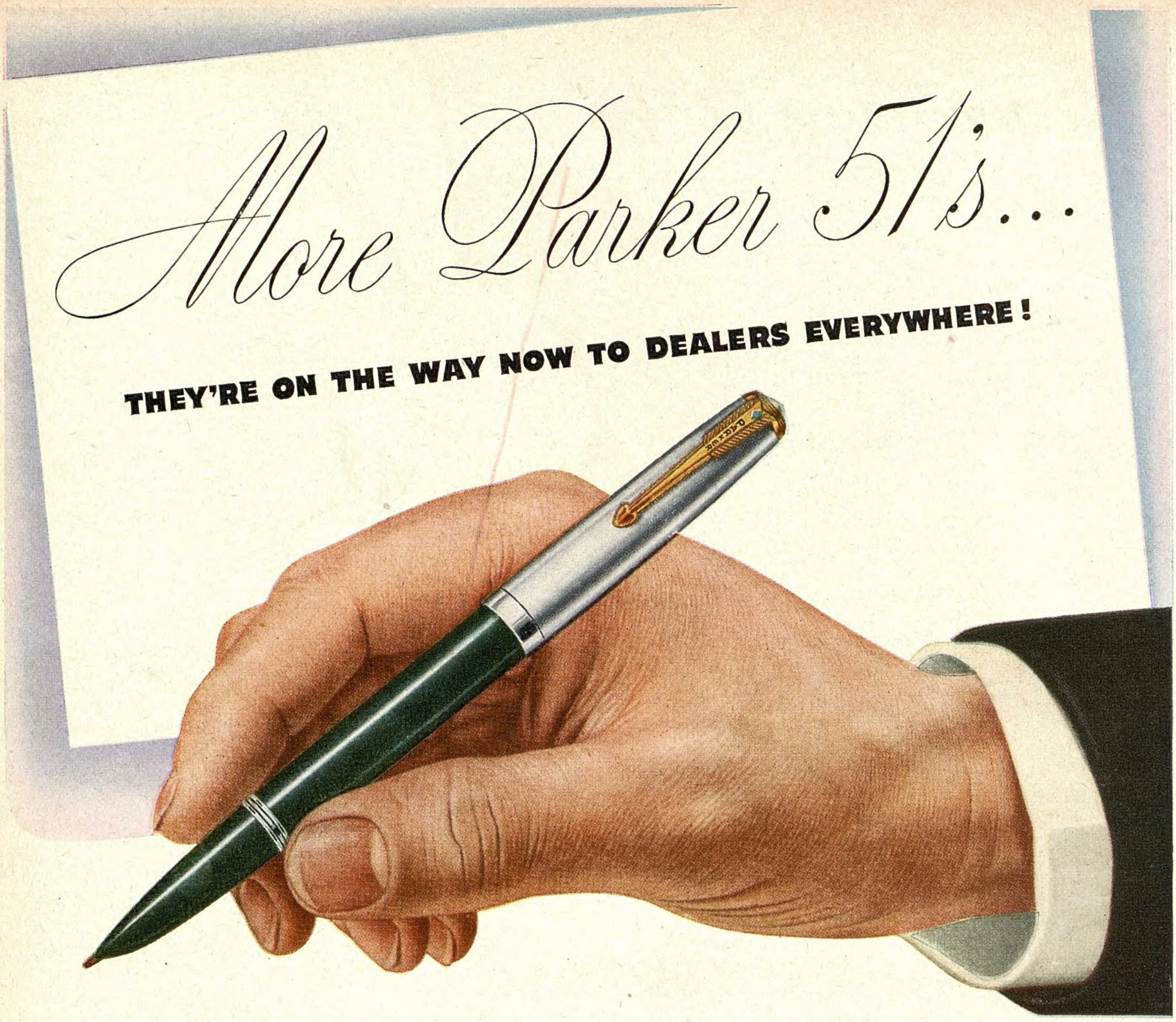
Liberty

APRIL 20, 1946 10c

Book: ONE ANGEL LESS — A Thrill-Packed Murder Mystery

LAST CALL FOR WORLD PEACE BY SENATOR JOSEPH H. BALL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★ ARTICLES

Last Call for World Peace, *Senator Joseph H. Ball*............... 15
The Gilded Easter Lily, *Jean Muir*............... 16
There's Romance in Railroads, *Paul Gallico*............... 18
They're Crazy to Run! *Will Cloney*............... 20
Preacher of the Woods, *Lewis B. Funke*............... 22

★ STORIES

Skulduggery, *Marjorie Carleton*............... 26
Margit—Short Short, *Eleanor Buckles*............... 28
It Could Be Verse, *Allan R. Bosworth*............... 30
Big-Time Operation—Conclusion, *Mitchell Wilson*............... 32

★ PICTURES

The Camera Eye............... 24

★ BOOK CONDENSATION

One Angel Less—*H. W. Roden's fast-moving murder mystery—abridged to a reading time of one evening*............... 35

★ FEATURES

Vox Pop............... 6
On the Beam............... 10
Veterans' Bulletin Board............... 13
Books in Review............... 50
Crossword Puzzle............... 50
Colonel Stoopnagle's Fictionary............... 62
Woman-Talk............... 64
Liberty Goes to the Movies............... 75
The Thropp Family............... 78

★ EDITORIAL

Is America Really the Beautiful? *Paul Hunter*............... 82

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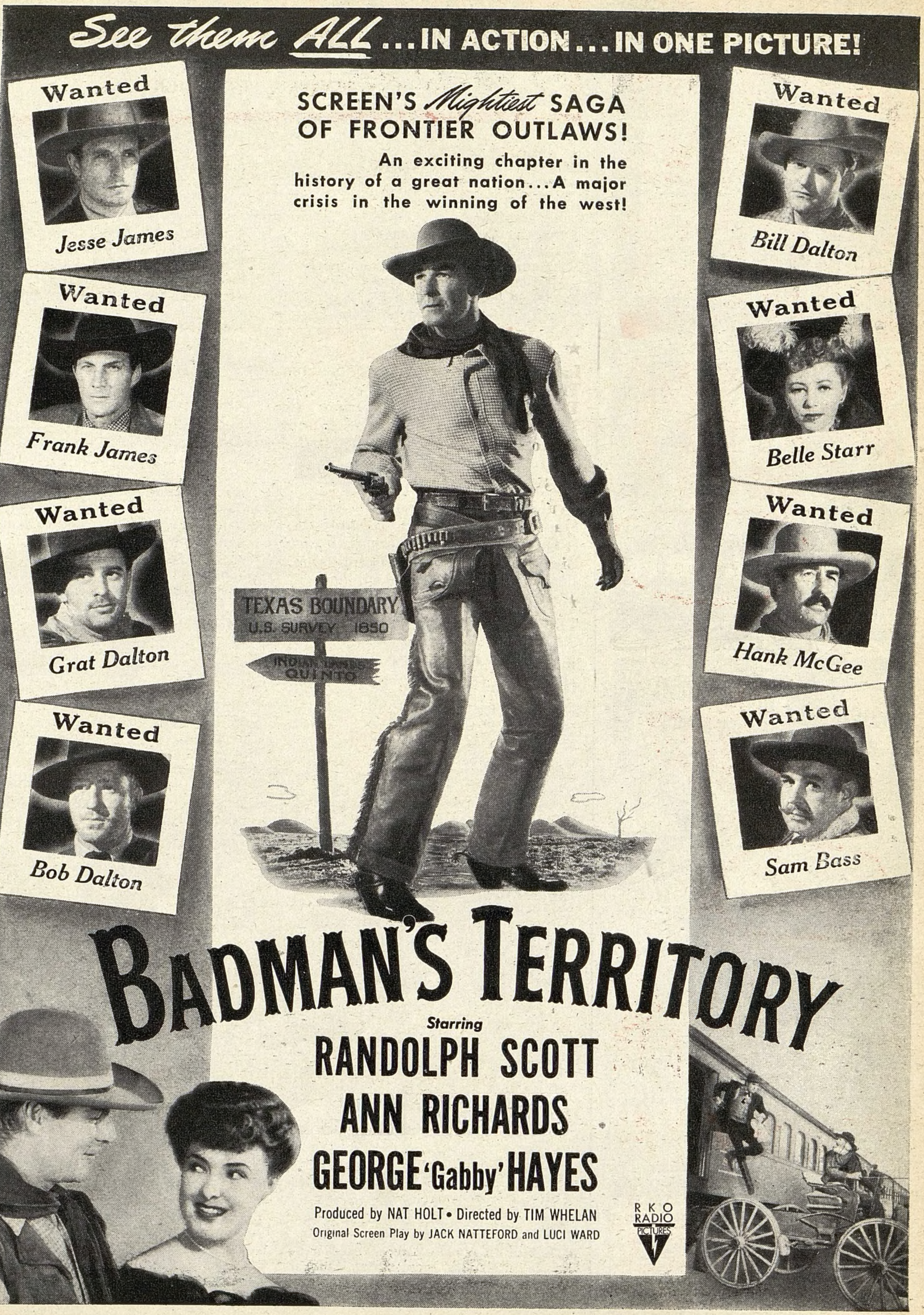
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Jesse James
Wanted
Frank James
Wanted
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Wanted
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Wanted
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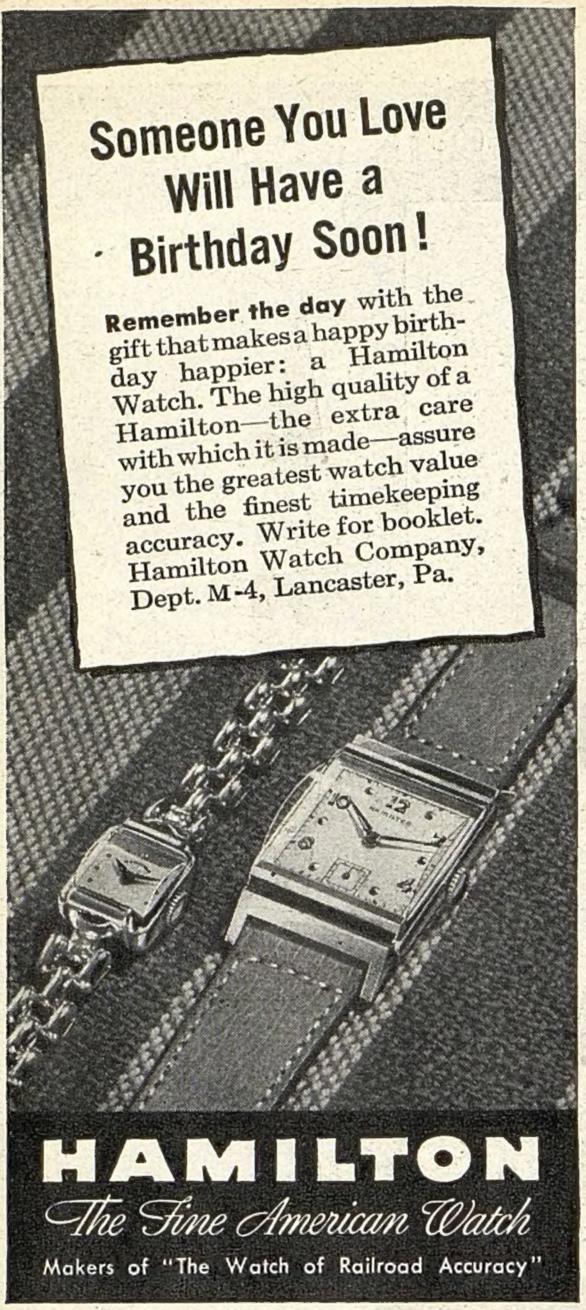

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VOX POP

"The Voice of the People"

SOLUTION BY PENSION

Kansas City, Mo.—I have just read Paul Hunter's editorial, Economic Theory and Fact (March 2). He says that labor must "co-operate with management in achieving new peaks of efficient operation" so that there will be "such a flood of goods that the dollars in labor's pockets will buy more and more . . ." But has he considered that there is a continual lessening in the number of labor's pockets?

"SOME LETTUCE!"
F C

Machines that are now in use and being perfected are taking the place of men in production. Machines operated by a very few men produce more in an hour than many times that number of men could produce in a day. Now what becomes of these displaced men? Theirs are labor's pockets that cannot buy more and more goods. And most of them are the workers who are called "too old." There is a way out. Our government is lending untold millions of dollars to foreign nations with the agreement that the money must buy goods made in U. S. A.

Then let our government be as generous to our elderly citizens and lend each one every month enough dollars to ensure them a comfortable living—with the agreement that this pension must be spent for our goods in thirty days. Then there is no danger of inflation, unemployment, and depression.—*C. A. Darr.*

SCRIPT NOT SHERWOOD'S

Los Angeles, Calif.—In Eager Beaver of the Movie Makers (February 2), Sara Hamilton states, as an indication of David O. Selznick's personal industry, that "Painstakingly he rewrote Robert Sherwood's script on Since You Went Away."

The only script Mr. Sherwood ever wrote for Mr. Selznick is Rebecca, which was written in 1939.

From 1940 to 1945, Mr. Sherwood held various government posts, including that of director of Overseas Operations for the OWI; and the script of Glory for Me, upon which he is now at work for Samuel Goldwyn, is the first motion-picture assignment that he has accepted since leaving government service.

Since You Went Away was written and produced while Mr. Sherwood was far afield from Hollywood and engaged 100 per cent of the time in government work.

I am an admirer and friend of Miss Hamilton, and would ordinarily report the above to her on the telephone, but since she is off somewhere careening about South America with Lana Turner, I feel obliged to call it to your attention.—*William Hebert, Samuel Goldwyn Productions, Inc.*

TRUE PORTRAIT

Los Angeles, Calif.—James R. Webb's story, Hateful Romance (March 2) was an excellent piece of writing. It should remind the American people that the majority of Germans still have the ideals of Nazism in their souls and minds. It portrays the German for what he is —a friend to your face; an enemy behind your back.—*W. E. B.*

WHAT'S IN THE COUNTRY?

New York, N. Y.—What's all this guff that goes on every spring about the glories of the country and the horrors of the city? Give me the city any day.

What has the country got that can match it? So you go to the country. There aren't any air-cooled restaurants to eat in or movies to relax in. The food deteriorates faster than you can cook it over a messy open fire. Your clothes get all mildewed. And when it rains, you have to grin and get wet. Maybe it's a case of the grass being greener on the other side of the fence, but this year I'll pass up the grass altogether.—*Jean Amber.*

VETERAN—GET WISE

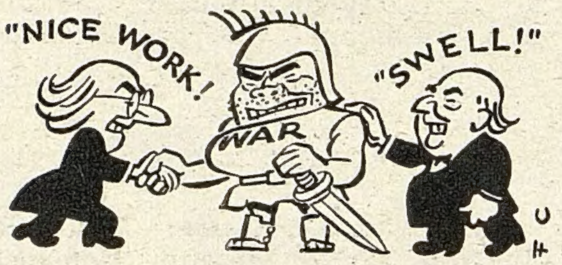
Boston, Mass.—After thinking seriously for a long time, I have come to the very sad conclusion that the Army has instilled in our youth a certain amount of irresponsibility and lack of initiative that carries over into civilian life. Every veteran I have hired has fallen into the same pattern.

He will sit behind his desk or go out on the road and do what he's told for a while. Then suddenly he'll start lagging behind. He doesn't seem to care what becomes of his job; he'll push his problems off on somebody else as much as he can; he'll try to get away with everything in the books.

Maybe he thinks the world owes him a living. But he'd better get wise to himself. A man can't rest on his military laurels in the business world forever.—*Dave Connell.*

WAR'S A RACKET

San Francisco, Calif.—Nobody's ever going to get me to fight again.


"NICE WORK!"
WAR
"SWELL!"

As far as I'm concerned, war is a big racket. What happened to all the high ideals and principles we were supposed to be fighting for these past few years? Nothing—except that they've shriveled up under the hands of the politicians, who, for some inexplicable reason, seem to want war with anyone and everyone.

My buddies and I got along fine with the Russians when I was stationed in Iran, and I'll lay odds that people all over the world were—and are—shaking hands and being pals without any trouble. Give the little people true representation, and there won't be any more war.—*Jeff Stamin.*

LOST—FIVE YEARS?

San Francisco, Calif.—After reading Fame Over a Weekend (March 9), it would seem someone slipped up some place. Early in the article you say that Ray "is thirty-eight, and doesn't care who knows it." Then later on comes the news that Ray was born on January 3, 1903.

What's the trouble? Has Ray lost five years rather than a mere weekend?—*Helen Davis.*

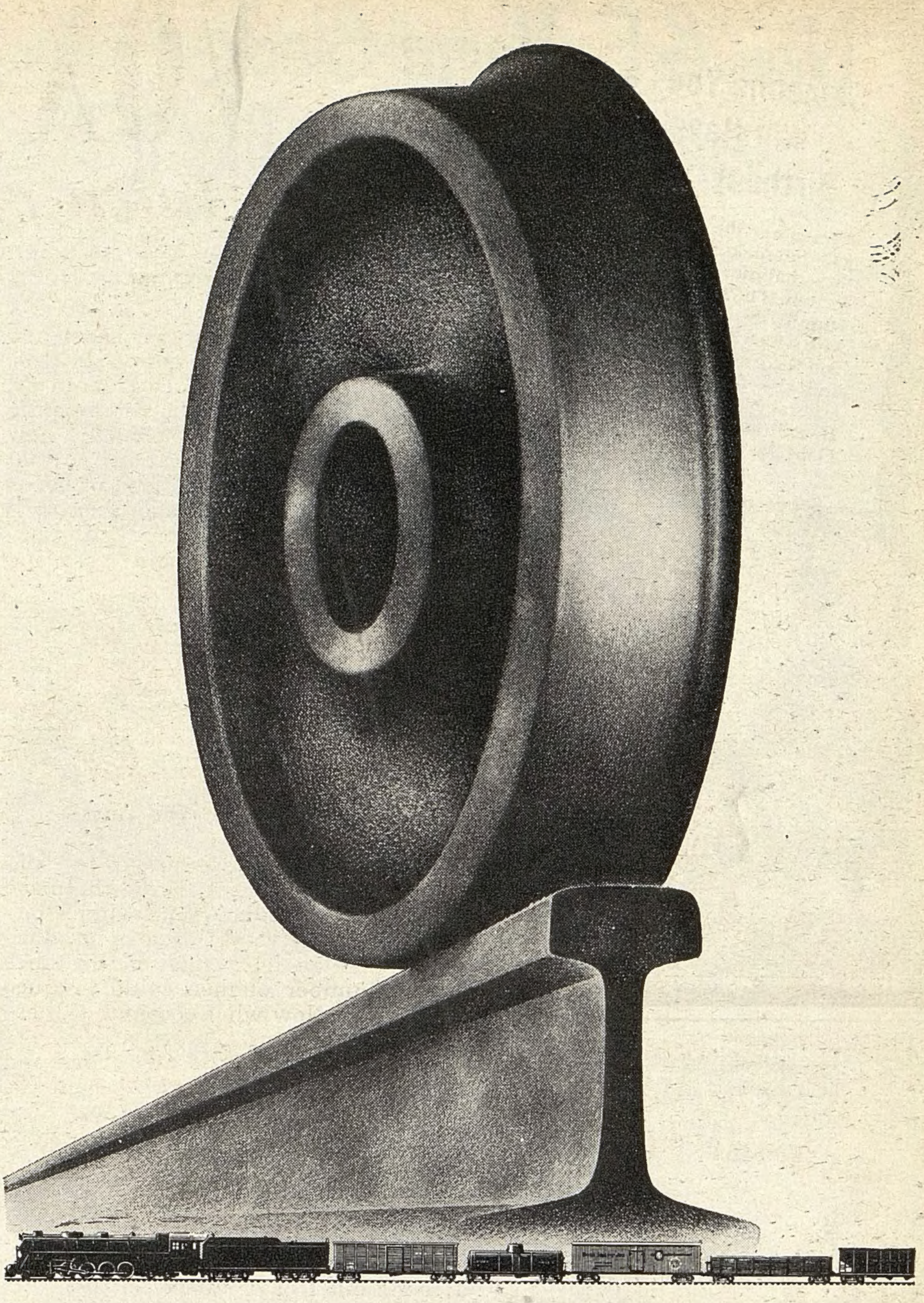
That's what sometimes happens when two numbers look so much alike. Ray was born in 1908.—Vox Pop Editor.

BREAK THE LINE

Pasadena, Calif.—The OPA has only succeeded in causing a stoppage in production, compelling labor to strike in self-defense and putting management in the position where it must decide between operating without profit or shutting down the plants.

The OPA is afraid that if we go

(*Continued on page 8*)



The flanged wheel on the steel rail

Carries the output of farm, factory, and mine—at an average charge no higher now than before the war

● Remember this picture of the wheel and the rail . . . the unique combination which makes it possible to run trains of cars . . . the only means of transportation with the capacity to meet America's major needs . . . in peace as well as in war.

Flanged wheels on steel rails, plus a vast volume of traffic, made it possible for railroads—despite steep increases in wages and costs in the past five years—to haul freight at charges which generally are no higher now than before the war. It still costs, on an average, less than one cent for hauling a ton of freight a mile.

Railroad charges depend on both operating costs and traffic volume—but whatever changes the future may bring, the flanged wheel on the steel rail will still be America's basic reliance for dependable transportation at the lowest possible charge.

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But the Heralder's "Select-A-Larm" turns out the "sleep-like-a-log" folks with a clear, loud, unmistakable call. *Tuned up*, there's just no ignoring it!

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Accurate—Electrically checked and regulated by your Power Company to correspond with official Arlington time.

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Thrifty—Year after year of service—for *only a penny a week!*

For waking "as you like it" . . . for a sensational value . . . for long, accurate service, buy the Heralder with "Select-A-Larm" feature. General Electric Co., Bridgeport, Conn.

General Electric Clocks

GENERAL ELECTRIC

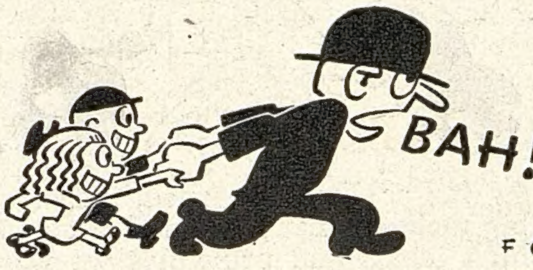
(*Continued from page 7*)

back to the law of supply and demand "at this time," manufacturers will make fortunes. But there is no danger. Income taxes will take care of that, for most of the profits for a long time to come will go toward paying our enormous national debt.

America can stand booms and money panics, overproduction and famines; we are used to such and always come out with our chins up. But democracy cannot stand insidious sapping away of individual rights supposedly guaranteed by our Constitution.—*Early Van Deventer.*

CIRCUS vs. ZOO

New York, N. Y.—Every year I have to take the kids to the circus, and I'm sick and tired of it. What's so wonderful about the circus anyhow? What's it got that the zoo doesn't have, except that it's more crowded, the peanuts are more expensive, the animals are more ordinary, and the whole place is dirtier?



The zoo's here all year round, but nobody ever wants to go. Just let the circus come to town, and the howl goes up.—*Bernie Roper.*

IF F. D. R. WERE HERE

Los Angeles, Calif.—If F. D. R. were only alive today, the world would have a much better chance for survival. He would have known what to do and how to do it.

Take the international situation, for instance. He would have acted as a balance wheel between Great Britain and Russia. He would have compromised where necessary, and wouldn't have sided with one or the other country all the time. He would have given Russia the atom bomb secret. They'll get it anyhow, and our secrecy is only building up ill will. He would have been tough where he had to be tough, but he wouldn't have treated Russia as if she were on trial before the world.

Domestically he would have handled the strike situation with more finesse. He wouldn't have created fact-finding boards all over the place just to postpone the issue. He would have given them the power to enforce their findings, if he created them at all.

He would have demobilized the services with less injustice and less delay. There wouldn't have been any riots overseas, because the point system would have been executed with fairness and less red tape.

The world lost a big hunk of hope when Roosevelt died.

I wish he had a double who could carry on where he left off.—*Anna Mae Abely.*

GIVE UNO A CHANCE

PHILIPPINE ISLANDS—What has happened to all the high ideals formulated while our skins were still in the balance—all those good intentions, promises, talks of a UNO as a peace guaranty to humanity?

Why are the major powers already pulling the teeth out of the UNO? Is it too much to the general advantage of mankind? What is this hocus-pocus talk about a secret pact?

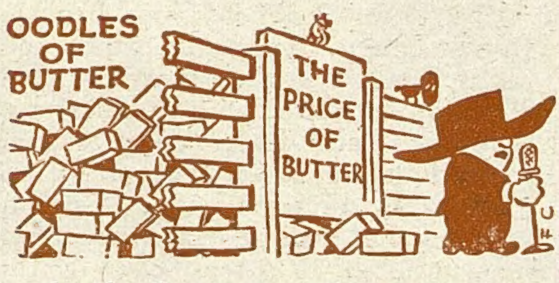
We ought to have an investigation to clear up any further possibilities of such deals, before we wake up some day and find we (through the powers that be) have given Alaska away for some concession in Korea.

Whom do we intend to tackle next with our proposed large, remodeled postwar Navy, and the rest of our militaristic talk, or have we decided to doom the UNO automatically in order to keep our militarists in power?

It is abhorrent and sad to squander billions more of the nation's money for any cause other than a good humanitarian one. The only solution now is for each and every one of us to get behind the UNO and push. —*T/5 C. J. Mitchell.*

INFLATION?

ANACORTES, WASH.—One Sunday evening not so long ago, when Fiorello LaGuardia was speaking for Liberty, he discussed the whys and wherefores of the butter shortage. He missed one (the right) answer. To come to the point, the cause is simply the low price of butter. Just raise the price of butter and the shortage will be no more.—*E. E. McDugle.*



INCENTIVE SCHEMES

NEWARK, N. J.—The letter by Jim Kastors in Vox Pop (March 23) will satisfy very few people. He wants profit-sharing and co-operatives as a solution to the strike situation. But it is well known that the unions do not favor profit-sharing or incentive schemes.

Perhaps they feel it's too perfect a solution to the workingman's problems.—*Joe Kap.*

JAMES CROW'S WHISKEY

On every barrel head he stamped "JAMES CROW'S WHISKEY"

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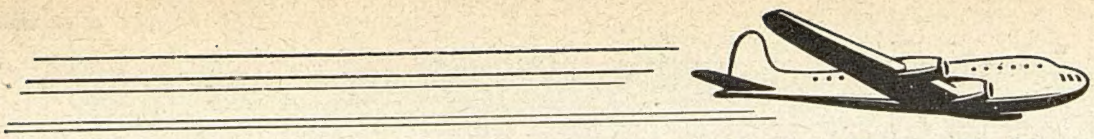

ON THE BEAM

BY WAYNE PARRISH

Air liners of the near future: A preview of six major types that will soon be in service . . . Airport development in Missouri

THOSE of you who travel by air have been accustomed during past years to flying in one type of transport airplane, the faithful twin-engined Douglas DC-3 carrying twenty-one passengers. A few air lines were operating fourteen-passenger Lockheed Lodestars, and TWA had a small fleet of four-engined Boeing Stratoliners carrying thirty-six passengers, which it put back in service last year.

From the present outlook, the air-line system of the country will undergo plenty of changes in the next few years. With more than $260,000,000 worth of new transport planes on order, there are six major types being built to provide a range of speed and seating capacity never before known in air transportation.

Four-engined planes will dominate the long routes, providing considerably more speed and carrying more passengers a longer nonstop distance. Twin-engined transports with their shorter operating ranges will provide the local services and connections. Comfort will be about uniform for all types, depending somewhat on frills about which each air line will decide for itself.

Here's the twin-engined line-up: The Douglas DC-3 will be a familiar sight at airports for a long time to come. Some time next year the Glenn L. Martin Company will make its debut on the scene, however, with the Martin 202, designed for short-haul service. Pennsylvania-Central, Braniff Airways, Colonial, and United are among the purchasers. Also to appear will be the Consolidated-Vultee Model 240. For feeder services there will be new models yet to be built, with Beech, Lockheed, and Boeing listed among the builders.

For the four-engined line-up, the outlook provides a lot of fascinating possibilities. Already in service on American, United, Delta, Pennsylvania-Central, and Western is the Douglas DC-4 with seat capacity varying from forty-six to fifty-seven. This is the famous C-54 model used by the Army and the Navy for world-wide service during the war, but now fitted up luxuriously for commercial lines. You'll find the DC-4 on a majority of the air lines by the end of this year.

Soon to come will be the Douglas DC-6, a modified version of the DC-4 with considerably more speed. Its fuselage is a little longer and it will predominate on long-distance flights, cutting down the transcontinental travel time to ten hours or so.

Already the four-engined Lockheed Constellation is flying in TWA from coast to coast with only a refueling stop at Kansas City. It provides an eleven-hour coast-to-coast trip with a $25 surcharge or extra fare. You'll find the Constellation in due course on Eastern Air Lines, too.

For transatlantic travel, the DC-4 and the Constellations are being used, and Pan American has begun using the latter on its San Francisco-Honolulu flights. But there will be two newcomers in the transocean field which should set some startling operations records: the high-altitude and very fast Republic Rainbow, and the big and fast Boeing Stratocruiser. The latter plane will probably show up domestically also.

Although priorities were eliminated some time ago, air travel has continued to be difficult in many areas. The demand has been high. But by summer much new equipment will have been put into service and the major bottlenecks removed.

So Missourians Have Been Shown

One state that has been notably behind in airport development but is moving ahead now is Missouri. Twenty communities have appropriated funds for airport development, and the state hopes to get its full share of federal-aid airport appropriations.

St. Louis has appropriated $11,000,000 in bonds for much-needed facilities in that metropolitan area, but the significant trend is to be found in the smaller communities, Joplin, Springfield, Sedalia, Albay, Jefferson City, Eldon, Maryville, and Chillicothe are among those which, at this writing, have either voted bonds or raised funds by public subscription. At Boonville the business men of the town raised $8,200 in subscriptions to build an airpark. Many small communities shy away when airports are mentioned because they visualize expensive projects. But many are also finding out that small airfields amply adequate for personal planes can be built for modest sums.

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KING SIZE
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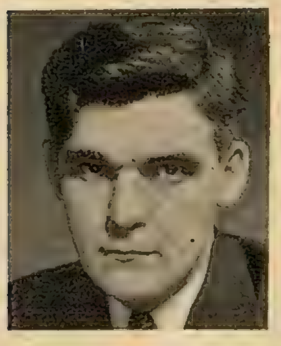


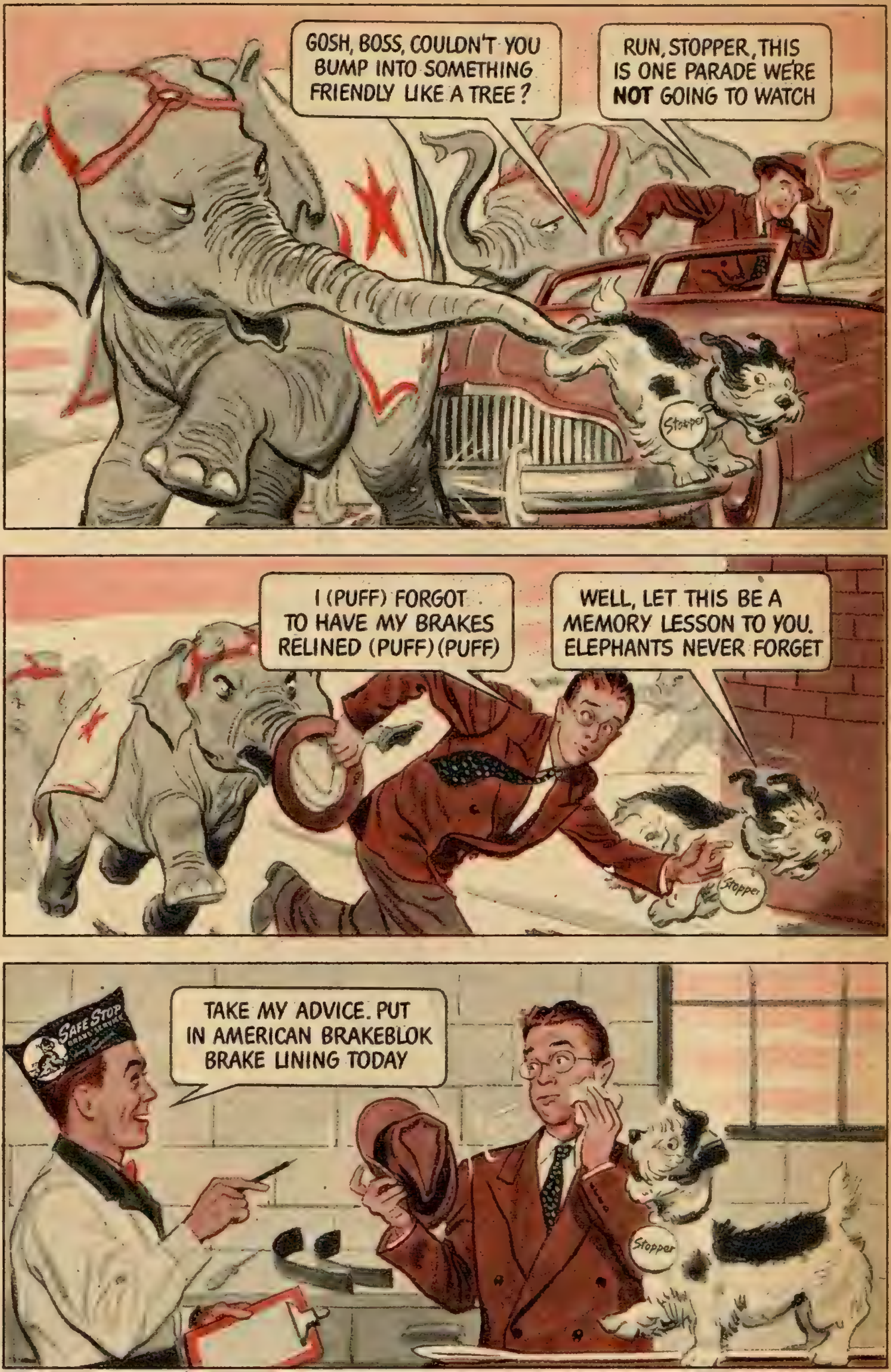
INTERNATIONALLY, Joseph H. Ball, Republican Senator from Minnesota, has always been ahead of his time. When most Americans were still playing ostrich, he came out for intervention. When war was the order of the day, he demanded organization for peace. And now, with the world struggling for survival, he's making a LAST CALL FOR WORLD PEACE. There's a way to beat the atomic bomb to the knockout punch, and the senator didn't need a crystal ball to find it. . . . If you're looking for Lewis B. Funke, chances are you'll find him behind a movie camera, on the golf course, or in the New York Times Building. He's drama editor of the paper, and on the free-lance side he's written about everything from ping-pong to the importance of languages in fighting the war. Now it's PREACHER OF THE WOODS in this week's Liberty. . . . One evening Jean Muir went to visit some lily growers near Brookings in her native Oregon. They'd been too busy growing lilies to bother about houses, so she slept in a tent beside the lily patch. And that's how THE GILDED EASTER LILY was born. Miss Muir was a newspaperwoman until last October, when checks from two magazines in one mail inspired her to resign.

NEXT WEEK

Liberty
Book: YOU AND I
WHY PEOPLE KILL THEMSELVES

WHY do people kill themselves? When does THE WILL TO DIE overcome the instinct for self-preservation? Margo Fischer and Natalie Sheehan explain the tangled mental processes that lead people down the one-way path to self-destruction. . . . Everyone took a bow when Rita Hayworth became a star. But in SOMETHING FOR THE BOYS, Elizabeth Wilson gives you the real low-down on the rise of Hollywood's heavenly body. . . . For a gripping story of deeply rooted love, read Liberty's Book Condensation, YOU AND I, by Myron Brinig.

If you can't stop – don't start


GOSH, BOSS, COULDN'T YOU BUMP INTO SOMETHING FRIENDLY LIKE A TREE?
RUN, STOPPER, THIS IS ONE PARADE WE'RE **NOT** GOING TO WATCH
Stopper
I (PUFF) FORGOT TO HAVE MY BRAKES RELINED (PUFF) (PUFF)
WELL, LET THIS BE A MEMORY LESSON TO YOU. ELEPHANTS NEVER FORGET
Stopper
SAFE STOP
TAKE MY ADVICE. PUT IN AMERICAN BRAKEBLOK BRAKE LINING TODAY
Stopper

STOPPER SAYS – "Don't crowd your luck too far. See your auto repair man at once. And don't assume all brake lining is alike. Ask him to install American Brakeblok Brake Lining. The chances are he'll agree it's tops."

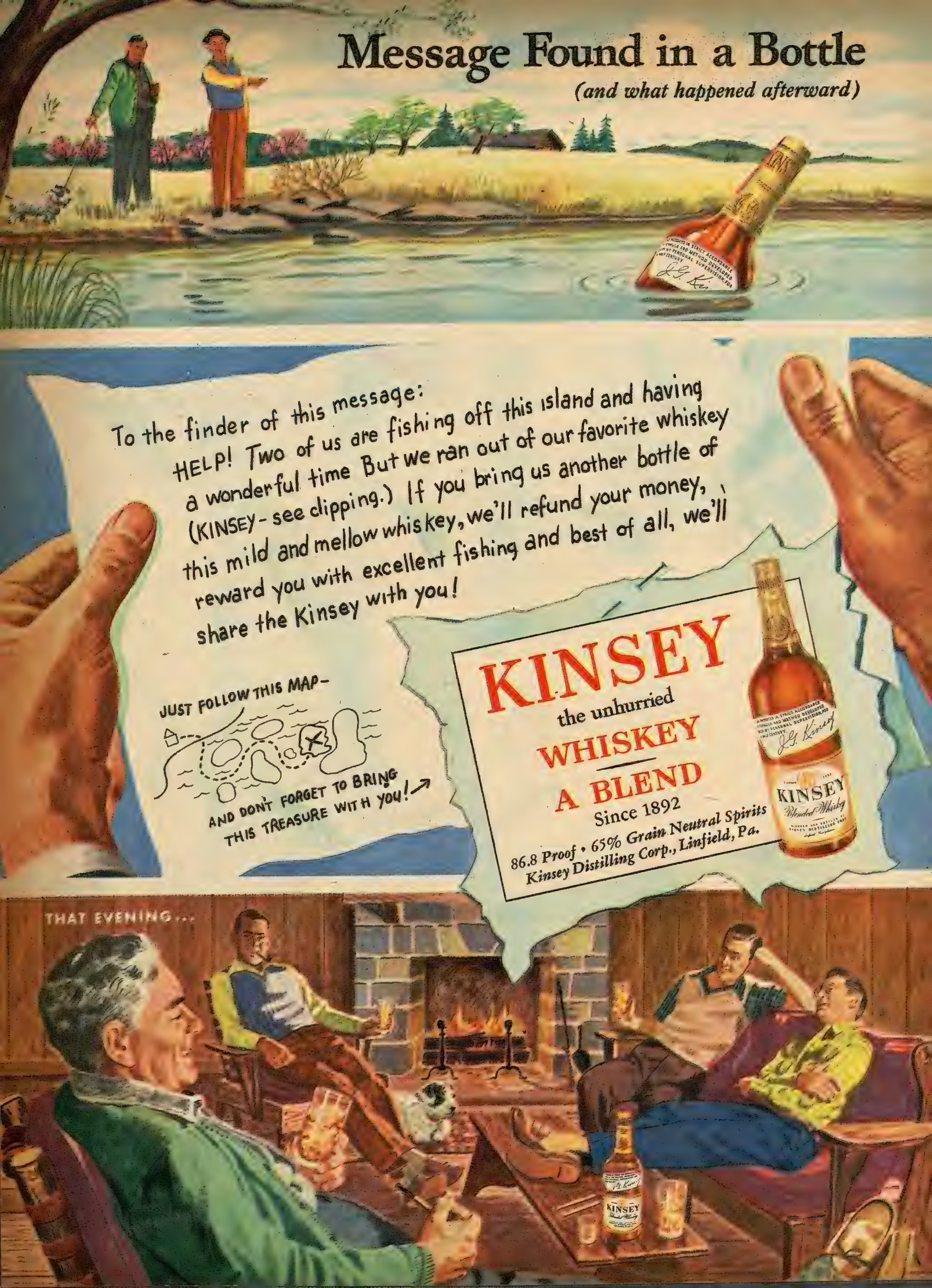
American Brakeblok
TRADE MARK REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.
BRAKE LINING

AMERICAN Brake Shoe COMPANY

AMERICAN BRAKEBLOK DIVISION
DETROIT 9, MICHIGAN

Message Found in a Bottle

(and what happened afterward)



To the finder of this message:
HELP! Two of us are fishing off this island and having a wonderful time But we ran out of our favorite whiskey (KINSEY- see clipping.) If you bring us another bottle of this mild and mellow whiskey, we'll refund your money, reward you with excellent fishing and best of all, we'll share the Kinsey with you!

JUST FOLLOW THIS MAP-

AND DON'T FORGET TO BRING THIS TREASURE WITH YOU!

KINSEY

the unhurried

WHISKEY

A BLEND

Since 1892

86.8 Proof • 65% Grain Neutral Spirits
Kinsey Distilling Corp., Linfield, Pa.

THAT EVENING...

VETERANS' Bulletin Board

BY MATT URBAN

WE have the word of Lieutenant General Edmund B. Gregory, new boss of the War Assets Corporation, that surplus disposal is finally going to be put on a common-sense, square-deal basis with particular attention to the needs of the country's veterans.

We went down to see General Gregory the other day to put before him a few of the insistent gripes and questions of veterans on the surplus snarl.

"I have every intention," he told us determinedly, "of cutting red tape or any other color tape that makes it difficult for worthy G.I. applicants to get essential equipment."

No delay!

Just recently, war surplus activities have undergone thorough revision. Much of the past confusion has been eliminated by condensing and centralizing the extensive surplus functions into one main organization—the War Assets Corporation. To determine the effect of this change, veterans should recheck on their pending applications and consult their Regional Surplus Office.

Surplus Chief Gregory, like any good shopkeeper, knows his merchandise well. He ought to know it. As Quartermaster General of the Army during the war years, he bought several billion dollars' worth of it for the government. Now his job is reversed and that earlier experience comes in handy.

If he were to have his way, he would eliminate, at least for the time being, the delay in delivering equipment to purchasers that is caused by endless and repetitious paper work—the necessity to make out approvals, inventories, proper service endorsements, and so on. He would employ simple "across-the-counter" methods and sell to the veterans at the regularly publicized disposal periods and places. If necessary, he believes, the government ought to make the sale first and straighten out the paper work afterward. In fact, claims the general, the simple bill of sale is an ample record for inventory purposes.

Specific authority for this streamlining is now being sought from Congress and, if the general has his way, these plans, in part or in full, will be in effect soon.

But to have this new procedure work out equitably, the new boss asks that veterans themselves do not misuse their buying privilege. They are urged especially to steer clear of resale transactions with dealers, and to buy only what they need in the amounts they require.

General Gregory asked us to pass on these pointers to vet applicants: Find out whether or not your particular purchase requires early certification to ensure preference. If you have already certified, then hang on to your old certificate of eligibility. Keep in touch with your Surplus Regional Office. You can do so simply by getting on the mailing list for the surplus program publications of these offices or being constantly on the lookout for various other forms of surplus sale advertising.

* * *

Miss Kay Centrick, Trenton, N. J. If you were honorably discharged from the WAC, are between twenty and fifty, will agree to serve either for the duration and six months or until September 30, 1946, and have a skill usable by the Army, you may be re-enlisted. Apply to the Adjutant General's Office. Once in, though, you can't ask for a discharge to get married, Kay.

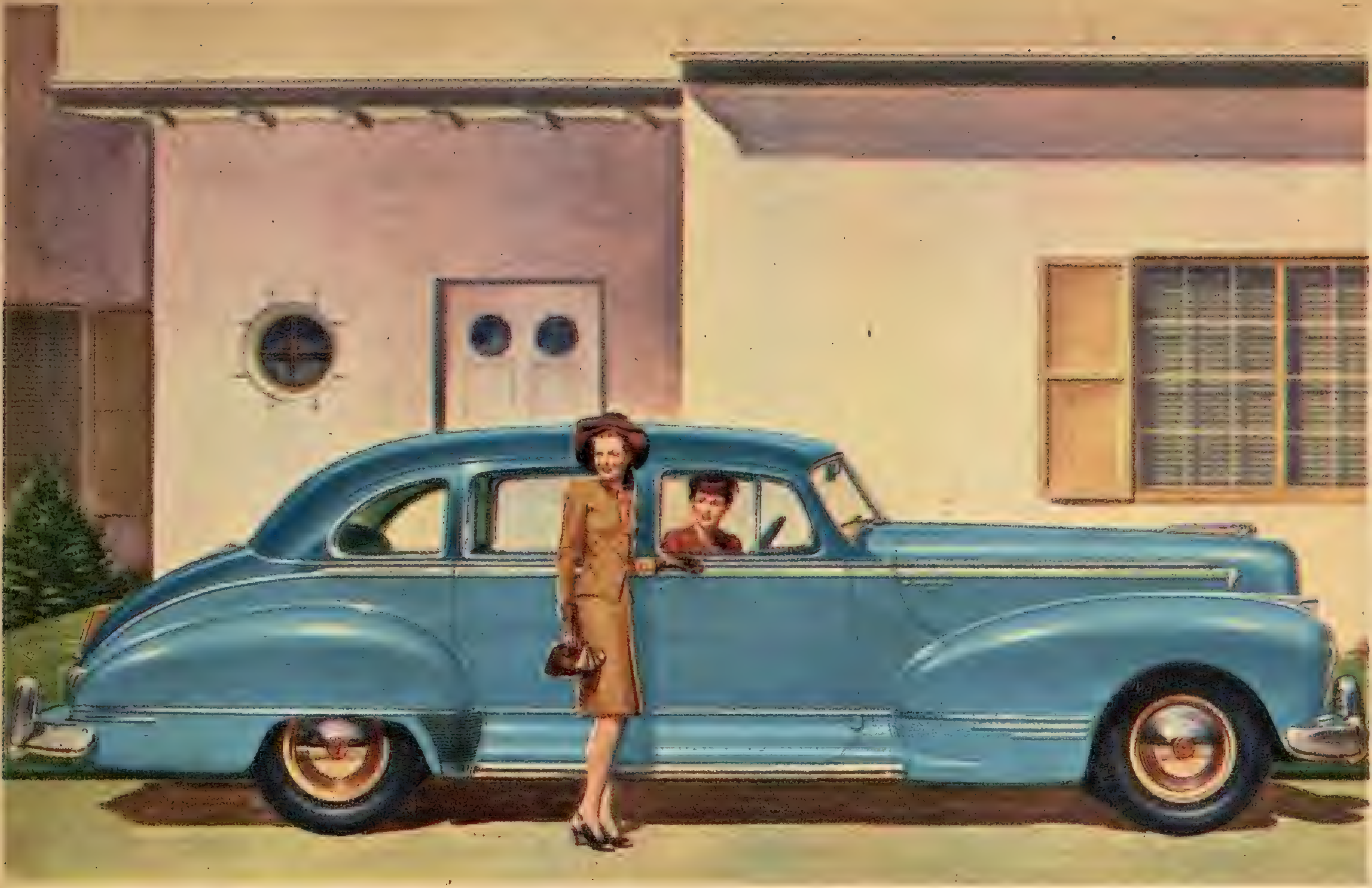
* * *

T/Sgt. William T. Moss, Erwin, Tenn. Try writing to Baggage Clearance Office, 50 Broadway, Room 1411, New York 4, N. Y., about the gear you left in England when you flew home, and which you have been unable to trace. Include all important descriptive data.

VETERANS: The Bulletin Board is your department, the watchdog of your interests—written and edited by a combat veteran of World War II. Make the most of it! Write in your gripes and your ideas. No names will be used without permission. Address Veterans' Bulletin Board, c/o Liberty, 37 West 57th Street, New York 19, N. Y.

KEEP THE CUP.....
I WANT LEAF GUM!
strausberg
LEAF SPEARMINT CHEWING GUM
LEAF LEAFMINT CHEWING GUM
THE FLAVOR LINGERS LONGER...
LEAF

Listen to LEAF'S
"Tin Pan Alley of the Air"
Every Saturday—
Coast to Coast.



Here's your new Hudson

. . . and the time to see it is NOW!

Interest in Hudson is running high these days—and dealers across the country expect to welcome at least a million visitors in the next few months.

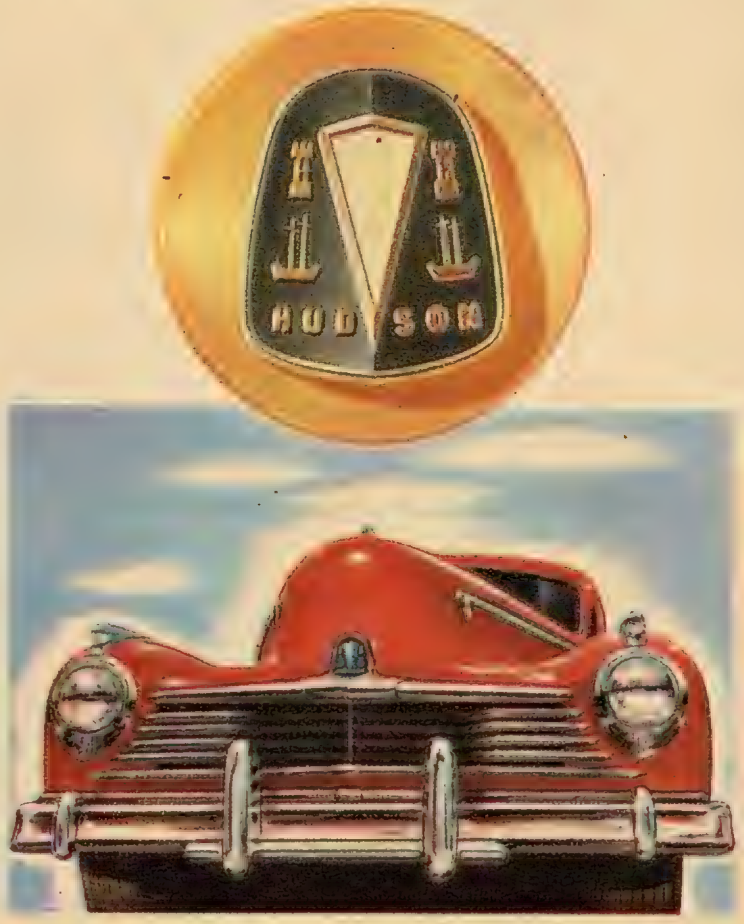
Tens of thousands of motorists have caught just a glimpse of Hudson's entrancing new front end, or the rich styling and fine appointments of completely new interiors. They want to know more about "The Fine Car of Low Price."

Tens of thousands of others will be looking for good things they have missed in other cars . . . exclusive easy-driving and riding-comfort features . . . the safety for which Hudson is famous. We can promise them even more than they expect.

There will be a long procession of Hudson owners at these showroom *debuts*—men and women more loyal than ever to Hudson because of their wartime driving experience.

You are invited to join them. But please don't stop with a *look.* Take one of these cars out on the road. *Feel* what it's like to drive in the lap of luxury behind a famous engine—Six or Eight as you prefer.

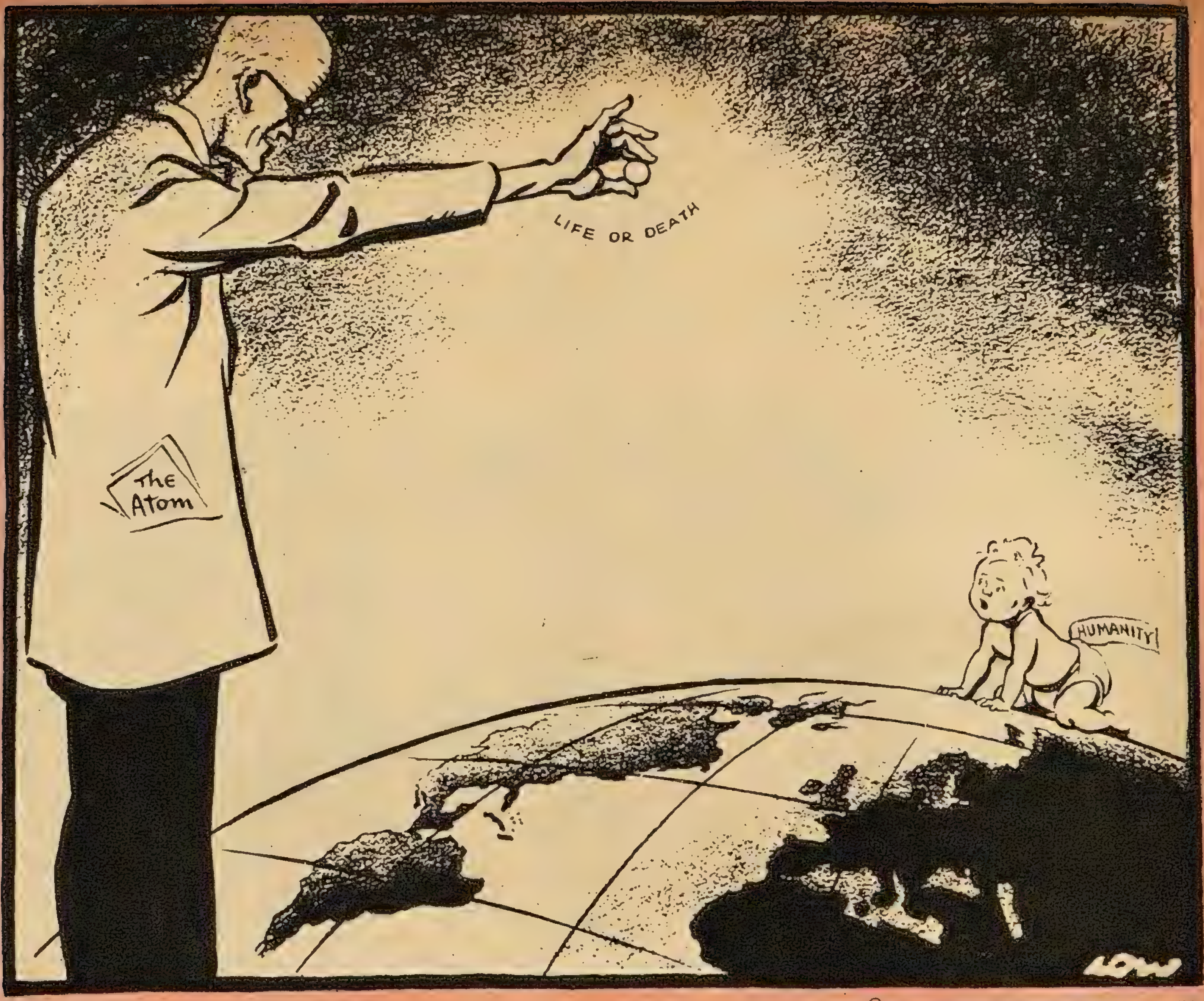
Yes—you'll be repaid by visiting a Hudson showroom before you decide on any 1946 car. Come—and bring the family.



Choice of famous 102-horsepower Super-Six and 128-horsepower Super-Eight engines—in a Super Series or a distinguished Commodore Series. Sedans, Broughams and Coupes in nine new standard body colors, with four 2-tone combinations available at extra cost. Pictured here—the 1946 Hudson Commodore Sedan.

HUDSON

HUDSON MOTOR CAR COMPANY, DETROIT 14, MICHIGAN



"Baby play with nice ball?"

LOW © ALL COUNTRIES: REPRINTED FROM N. Y. TIMES

Last Call for World Peace

BY SENATOR JOSEPH H. BALL

Senator Ball warns that man is running downhill to his doom unless he comes up with a new design for living in an atomic age

IT is 1990. The third world war, fought primarily with atomic bombs, ended in 1970. There was no peace conference. There were no peace treaties. The war ended some two years after it began. All the belligerents had run out of atomic bombs, airplanes, and rockets, and their facilities for making these weapons had been destroyed.

The United States is now mainly a farming country. All its great cities and its tremendous mass-production industries were destroyed. Its population is less than one third of what it was in the 1940s. Nearly half our people were killed in the destruction of our cities. Another third died in the epidemics which swept the country during and immediately after the war.

Those who survived were mostly living on farms or in small towns during the fighting. Consequently, only a small proportion of the engineers, scientists, technicians, and skilled craftsmen, who kept our complicated industrial machine going, survived. These few are beginning to develop small industries in the towns that still remain. But they are terribly handicapped. They must start from scratch and produce all their tools and fixtures before they can even begin to produce consumer goods.

Most people by far are living on farms, working from dawn to dusk to produce enough food, fuel, and fiber for their needs. Farming, of course, requires much more manpower than in the prewar era, for most of the farm machinery has long since fallen to pieces. And steel is precious stuff: because only a few relatively small plants have gotten back into production on a much reduced scale. Rail transport, like air transport, is a thing of the past, because the plants that made locomotives, boxcars, and airplanes were destroyed, as well as those that produced such basic materials as steel and aluminum. There are no automobiles, and there would be no gasoline to run them if they still existed. Refineries were among the first bomb targets of the war.

(Continued on page 60)

The Gilded Easter Lily

BY JEAN MUIR

TWO men with cardboard boxes wait at a crossroad near Brookings, Oregon. As a farmer turns his empty truck into the lane, they shoot out simultaneously from the bushes and scramble onto his running board.

"Twenty dollars if you let me scrape the dirt out the bottom of your truck," one shouts.

The other thrusts his face in the cab window. "Twenty-five dollars."

"No good," the farmer says sourly. "She's already cleaned out."

The curious behavior of these men is explained by the fact that scrapings from a lily grower's truck contain bulb scales from which other lilies can be grown. This eagerness to grow lilies is shared by hundreds of hopeful investors who have plunged in bulb land along the Oregon coast. Southern Oregon is now in the throes of an Easter-lily boom rivaling, in miniature, the tulip mania which swept Holland in the 1600s. Lily yarns are swapped at every country store, beer joint, and church social in Curry County—and 90 per cent of them are true.

It's true, for example, that aged pensioners have become men of substance in the last four years; that a high-school boy with one acre of ground sold his bulbs in October for $20,000; that old women of the area have grown enthusiastic, sunburned, and well-to-do; and that a man, lately on relief, paid $19,000 in income taxes last year.

The boom centers around Brookings, a little seacoast town 100 miles from a railroad. A few years ago it was the sour spot on the relief rolls of Curry County. Brookings lost most of its population in the mid-'20s when the C. & O. Lumber Company closed and millworkers scattered in search of other jobs. Houses went begging for tenants at $10 a month, and a buyer might have had his pick of cleared land for $50 an acre.

Brookings had no industry and very little money. But it did have a sweet, mild climate, a stretch of coast line protected from northern winds —and a lily bulb.

The *longiflorum* lily was brought to the Brookings Harbor area by Sydney Croft of Bandon. Working with stock which came originally from the bulb experimental station at Bellingham, Washington, he developed the Croft lily and managed to convince a few greenhousemen that it could be forced for the Easter trade. Then a fire at Bandon burned him out and he moved his stock to Curry County. Before his death several growers became interested in experimenting with the Croft, and by 1939 small shipments were made to Eastern florists. Commercially, however, the Oregon bulb was not yet in the running.

In 1939 about 22,000,000 bulbs of *longiflorum gigantum* ("gigs" to the trade) were imported from Japan for the 1940 Easter season. When the war with Japan cut off the import of "gigs," the supply from other sources was only a drop in the bucket—the lilies of Texas and Georgia, the Creole of Louisiana and Florida, and imports which came to about 2,500,000 bulbs, including the Mexican lily and *lilium harrisii* of Bermuda, where disease had almost wiped out a once thriving industry.

Frantic florists looked about for "gig" substitutes and discovered the Croft growing in the fields of Curry County. In some ways they found the Croft superior to the Japanese "gigs." It's a stocky plant whose big trumpet-shaped flowers have the texture and whiteness of bridal satin. It holds its foliage and escapes the scrawny-necked appearance of imported "gigs." But its great virtue is its freedom from disease. Greenhousemen found they lost only 3 per cent of the Crofts compared to a failure among Japanese bulbs which averaged 20 per cent.

Unlike Topsy, the Easter lily doesn't just grow. It's expertly nurtured in half a dozen places, among them Curry County, Oregon, where a fantastic, flash boom in lily bulbs has turned back yards into gold mines

Because the supply of lilies lagged some 20,000,000 bulbs behind the demand, each Croft was a gold nugget. The result was a leap in price from 12½ cents for a commercial bulb to 65 and 75 cents and finally $1 for the jumbos. Along with the Croft, other lily varieties boomed, the Kenyon-Davidson, the Estate, and the Ace. Early growers cleaned up quick fortunes. It was not unusual to hear of an acre yielding the grower from $15,000 to $20,000 a year. Some went as high as $25,000. People with backyard gardens took $2,000 or $3,000 out of their lily patches, and neighbors began feverishly to raise Crofts. Butchers, bakers, and odd-job men pulled the geraniums out of their window boxes and planted bulblets, dug up their front lawns, chased the hens out of the chicken yards and planted lilies.

As get-rich-quick stories spread over the Northwest, new investors poured in, rabid for a chance at the lily gold. They brought with them a fresh source of income to established growers. Revenue from the sale of planting stock to newcomers finally passed the sale of commercial bulbs for the Easter trade.

Each yearling and adult bulb produces from four to ten bulblets a year, found close under the soil, clinging to the stem of the mother. In pre-boom days surplus stem bulblets were thrown out or sold by the truckload. With the stampede of would-be investors in the field, they were meted out sparingly at prices ranging from 10 to 25 cents apiece. When the supply of bulblets gave out, there was nothing for hopeful buyers but to mob the growers' trucks and pay whacking big prices for the privilege of scraping up the dirt and bulb scales.

All along the ocean front, from the Del Norte County, California, through Gold Beach, Oregon, up the coast to Astoria and over the fields of the Olympic peninsula in Washington, plantings began to appear. Some Oregon bulblets went as far afield as Vancouver Island, to Maryland and to Florida. But because the Brookings area was the origin and center of the bonanza and because so many of its residents were elderly and on relief, it was the elderly and depressed who really feathered their nests with lilies. "Sort of like the Townsend Plan," one old pensioner remarked.

LAST year, 300 growers of the district made $2,000,000 in lilies with plantings averaging less than one acre apiece. The same year, mail and bank deposits doubled. Good cleared land which six years ago went begging for $50 and $30 an acre was snapped up at $1,500 and in some cases at $3,000 an acre. Today, Brookings is one of the richest towns per capita in Oregon. To call the old relief rolls is to read the names of the well-heeled families of the area. Every cabin, every room, and square of attic space is rented.

In 1944 about 3,000,000 domestic bulbs were ready for the market, of which the Northwest furnished 1,500,000. Because of a long dry summer and the resulting meager crop, the increase last year was slight. It has been estimated that 12,000,000 Oregon bulbs will be coming to maturity next autumn.

Some agriculturists, however, are watching the boom with apprehension. R. M. Knox, Curry County agent, warns prospective investors: "Don't plunge in lilies unless you can afford to lose whatever you put into them. No one knows how long the present fabulous prices will last. If lilies follow the pattern of other boom crops, they should go down just as fast as they came up. Or even faster."

Moreover, the day is past when a

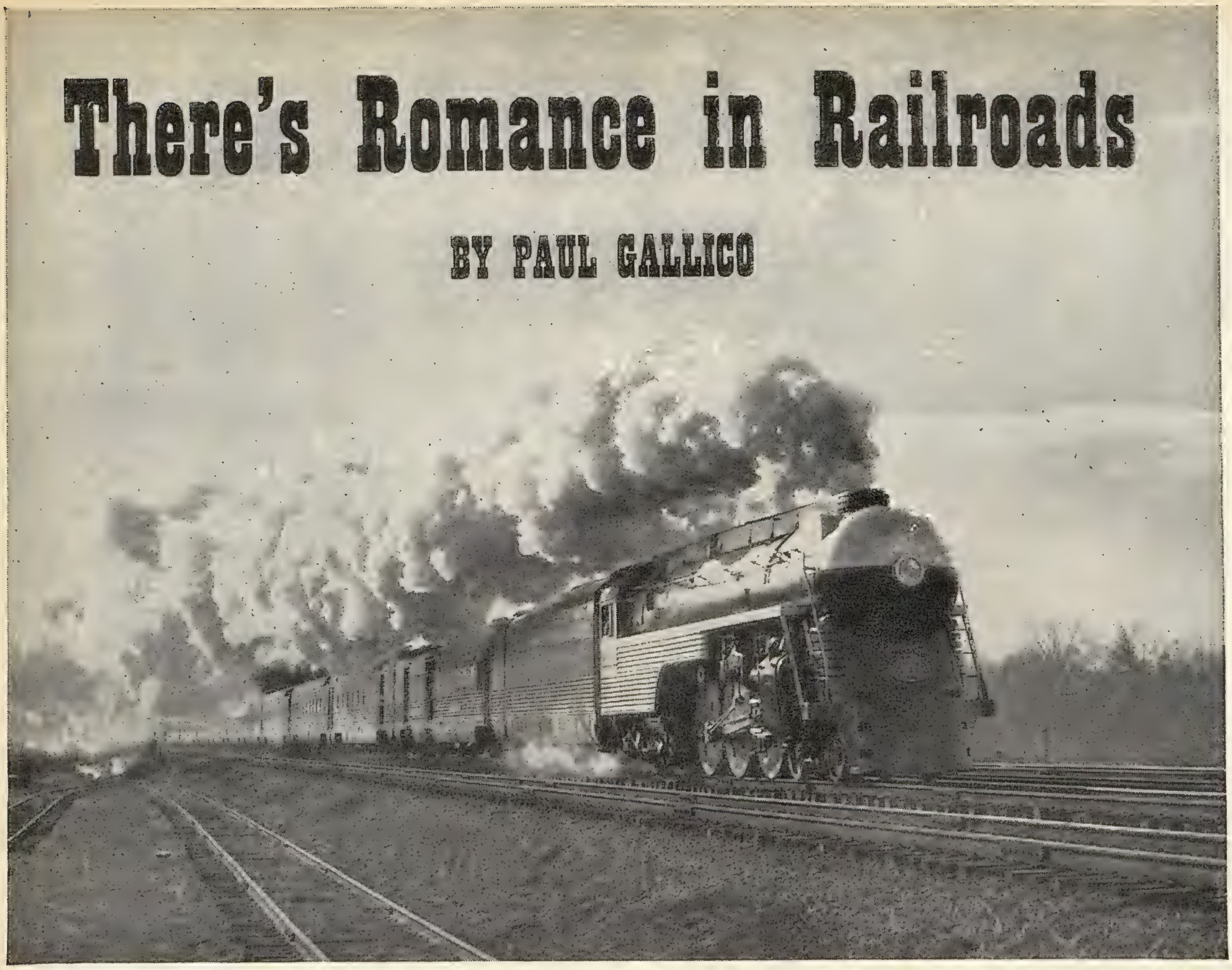
(*Continued on page 63*)

PHOTO BY RALPH VINCENT

In June, Oregon's lily fields look like this, but all their lush bloom is fated for the compost pile. It's bulbs the growers want.

There's Romance in Railroads

BY PAUL GALLICO



The Empire State Express, latest but not last word in speed and luxury, runs from New York to Detroit and Cleveland.

It's a rich, fabulous century America's railroads look back on, and there's life aplenty in the Iron Horse yet

COINCIDENT with the celebration of its centenary by the Pennsylvania Railroad this month, the yesterday and today of American railroad travel comes to an end. The new era, the tomorrow of luxury voyaging by rail, is just around the corner, a small piece down the track. And it holds a promise of speed, smoothness, safety, and passenger pampering never before attained in the days when the railroads were without competition in the field of overland transportation.

And whereas in the past it took from fifty to seventy-five years to bring comfort of railroading to the point where a ride in the steamcars was not a punishment and a horror, the modern improvements planned today will take no such time. A few years from now we who ride the trains may look back and think upon the hardships and discomforts of old-fashioned travel back in 1940.

One hundred years ago this month the State Legislature of Pennsylvania passed an act incorporating the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, and shortly after that a charter was granted. By 1849 the company owned a pair of odd-looking and not too reliable locomotives, two brigades of cars, as rolling stock was then called, and sixty-one miles of track between Harrisburg and Lewiston, Pennsylvania.

Today, after a hundred years of vital and uninterrupted growth, the gigantic corporation owns about 5,000 locomotives, 7,000 passenger cars, and operates some 27,000 miles of track. On order for tomorrow are new giant Diesel turbine locomotives as well as newer, larger, and more powerful electric engines to haul the new-type sleepers, diners, club cars, theater cars, three-tier berth units, and cars of drawing rooms in suites. Every great railroad in the United States is planning to meet the competition of the air age with a new combination of speed and super-luxury never before approached and certainly never dreamed of in the days when the country and its railroads were young.

One hundred years ago—1846. That was only yesterday when your grandpappy was a boy, and no more than seventeen years after the first successful steam locomotive ran on rails in the United States, causing the editorial writer of the Western Sun, published in Vincennes, Indiana, to view with more than ordinary alarm. Clarioned he:

". . . It will set the whole world a-gadding. Twenty miles an hour, sir! . . . Grave plodding citizens will be flying about like comets. It will upset all the gravity of the nation. None of your hop-skip-and-jump whimsies for me."

You who take for granted the civilization in which you board a slick all-steel railroad car, and wake up the next morning five or six hundred miles from where you were when you went to bed, probably have little conception of what a railroad ride was like when your grandfather or great-grandfather took a tearful farewell from his family, who never expected to see him alive again, and boarded the steamcars for a sixty-five-mile trip that took from five hours to five days, depending upon how the apparatus happened to be functioning.

The first voyagers on this fiendish contraption were the real heroes, because the cars were open or, if modeled after the stagecoaches, carried passengers on the roof. Locomotives were wood-burning and belched a steady rain of glowing embers, not only setting alight the countryside but scorching the luckless travelers themselves.

LET us suppose you had the courage and the need to make a fifty-mile journey around 1835 or 1840. You would arrive at the station prepared to board the train should it arrive at eleven in the morning, the approximate time scheduled. However, employees of the line would make you no rash predictions as to whether it would arrive on time that morning, that day, or at all.

The stationmaster would be too busy to furnish you with information, because he would be up a tree, but literally, or rather, up a pole. He was the original pole sitter, for every intermediate station was furnished with a tall pole with a platform on top and a ladder. Come traintime, the stationmaster would climb to his perch to scan the horizon with a spyglass for some sign of the approaching locomotive. This was before the days of the telegraph.

In those times a train would depart from its point of origin, huff and puff itself around a corner, and literally vanish into the blue. Nothing would be known about its adventures until it came home again the next day, if it did. Passengers aboard it never knew when they might reach their destination. Persons like yourself, waiting at a station along the road, had no way of telling when it would get there, beyond the twenty-minute warning of the stationmaster calling "Smoke ho!" from his lookout.

The stopping of the train would be an adventure in itself if it was done as practiced on the old Newcastle-Frenchtown Railroad. Brakes were primitive or nonexistent. A quarter of a mile from the station the engineer would let off a blast of steam —there were no bells or whistles— and this explosion would wake up the Negro roustabouts. They would gather in a huddle on both sides of the track like an embattled football team waiting to stop the fullback plunging through to a touchdown. As the locomotive slid in, they would seize it and dig their heels in the ground to slow it down. When its pace had been sufficiently reduced, the stationmaster, now down from his lookout pole, would thrust a fence rail between the spokes of the driving wheel, and that did it.

You would then hand the captain (he didn't become the conductor until twenty-five years later) your ticket, which was either a stamped metal disk or a piece of glazed and colored pasteboard. In those days a train crew consisted of the engineer, the hero who sat at the throttle in imminent risk of being blown to kingdom come, and the captain, who dealt with the passengers. These two worthies did not get on well. The captain insisted he was boss. The engineer behaved as though he were, and there were frequent clashes between them.

On the old Erie Railroad, a captain once devised a gadget to let the engineer know when he wanted him to stop. He tacked up staples the length of his three cars, ran string through the staples and tied it to a billet of wood in the engine cab. When he jerked the string the billet danced on the floor, irritating the engineer, who forthwith cut the string. The captain put up another string and jerked it. The engineer cut it again. At the next stop, the captain warned the engineer:

"Sirrah, the next time you cut that string, you will have to meet me to prove who is the better man then and there."

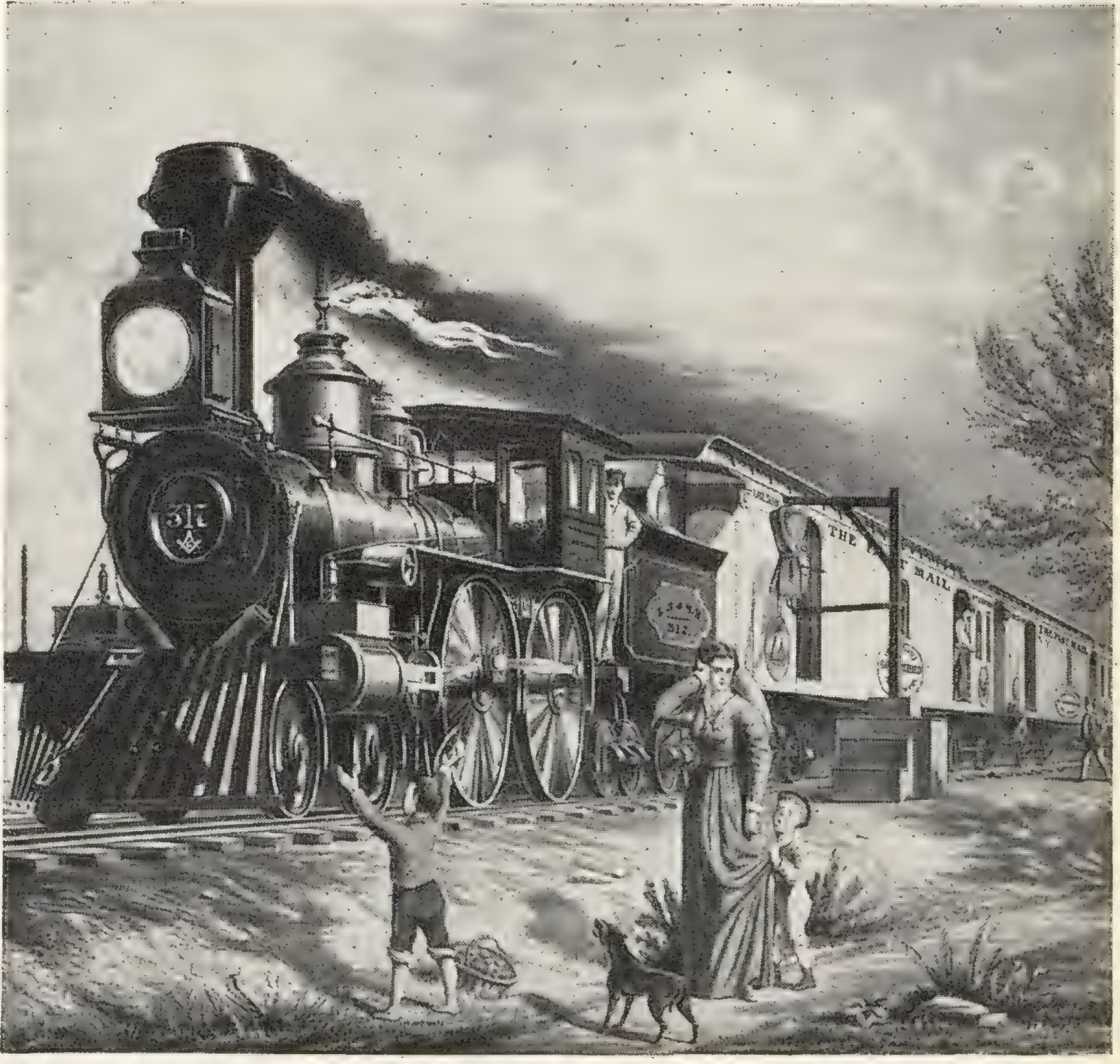
They started. A little way down the track, the captain jerked the string. The billet jiggled. The engineer shifted his cud, outed his faithful bowie and cut the string, and then permitted his iron monster to glide to a graceful halt. To the cheers of the enthusiastic passengers, the pair got off the train and battered each other goofy for six fast rounds until the captain prevailed and the engineer lay bleeding, owning himself the lesser man. The passengers stuffed him back into his cab. The next time the captain jiggled, the engineer cut no string. And that, so help us all, was the beginning of the system of bell-rope communication between conductor and engineer still in use on many modern trains.

ONCE aboard, you were seated on a hard, smooth, narrow bench in a low wooden car that had one small nonfunctioning ventilator in the roof. There were windows, but they weren't opened and they never have been since. The door had to be kept shut because of the debris, cinders, ashes, and burning brands that would have come flying in. It was stifling hot in summer and freezing cold in winter, except for the fellow who got the seat next to the potbellied wood-burning stove located up front in the car. The stove was fed pieces of wood by the passengers nearest and soon glowed red hot.

You could, if you were lucky, preempt the seat by the stove and make the trip drenched with sweat, while the passengers in the rear froze. But you had to be aware of one of the many hazards of travel. If there was an accident, or the train made a too-sudden stop, you got the stove in your lap or the stove got you in its lap, and, either way, your traveling days were apt to be terminated.

As for vittles and drink, both weak and strong, you carried them with you. The restaurant car did not make

(*Continued on page 76*)



The old wood-burner thrilled the bystanders and frequently terrified the passengers.

Annual phenomenon: 175 bunion derbyists start for Boston. Twenty-six miles and several hours later, about half of them will finish.

They're Crazy to Run!

A COUPLE of guys named Pheidippides and Paul Revere started it by getting their names in the history books a long time ago, so a couple of hundred guys named Joe have been imitating them for the last fifty years. The medium is the annual Boston Athletic Association marathon, which this week celebrates its Golden Anniversary.

In case you haven't looked at your history books lately, Pheidippides was the Greek courier who trotted approximately twenty-five miles from Marathon to Athens with the news of a great military victory, then fell dead after delivering the tidings. For almost twenty-four centuries the Greeks sought a way to commemorate this historic event. In 1896, when the Olympic Games were revived in Athens, a suitable memorial was conceived—a running race from Marathon to Athens over the route of Pheidippides.

That was how the marathon started, and among the first enthusiastic spectators was a Bostonian named John Graham, manager of the B.A.A. track team that paid its own way to compete in those Olympics. When he returned to America, he was all for staging a similar race in Boston.

Now, Boston has always been proud of its own courier, Paul Revere. And that famous ride of the 19th of April, in '75, not only heralded the shot heard 'round the world, it also provided Boston with a local holiday known as Patriots' Day. So the 19th of April was chosen as an ideal date for the new B.A.A. marathon. From 1897 to this week, the marathon has become as much a Boston tradition as the sacred cod hanging in the State House and the baked-beans on Saturday night.

Hundreds of thousands of conservative New Englanders, whose most violent form of exercise is running for a streetcar, jam the sidewalks every Patriots' Day to gaze in wonder at men who punish themselves for 26 miles 385 yards for nothing more material than a gold medal, a bowl of beef stew, and a wreath of laurel from the slopes of Mount

A couple of hundred guys will literally knock themselves out this week running for medals and beef stew. The Greeks started it, but it took staid Boston to dream up the maddest marathon of them all

BY WILL CLONEY

Olympus (but strictly from Brooklyn during the war years).

To the spectators it's a freak show with legs; to the legitimate runners it's a test of speed and endurance; and to the exhibitionists it's a chance to be a screwball before a ready-made gallery.

The competitors fall into three categories: the ones who train faithfully, running thousands of practice miles and qualifying as top-flight athletes in their own peculiar specialty; the ones who have legitimate hopes but lack physical resources; and the ones who enter to win a bet, get their names in the papers, prove they're better men than their wives, and be able to boast to their grandchildren that they once ran in a B.A.A. marathon.

Even the best marathoners will agree that they're nuts, but they want it qualified just a little. Says Johnny Semple, president of the Marathon Runners Association: "This is our hobby and we *are* nuts about it. But we're no crazier than the business man who plays thirty-six holes of golf, or the fellow who kills himself through four or five sets of tennis on a scorching afternoon."

The man who is Mr. Marathon himself makes a good case history. No matter where or when the Boston event is mentioned, some one will pipe up, "You mean the race that fellow Clarence DeMar always wins." That's a slight exaggeration, but DeMar has won seven times. He won his first B.A.A. race at twenty-three, his seventh at forty-two. What did his amazing athletic feats get him? Not much in worldly rewards. He had an athletic field named after him in Melrose, Massachusetts, his home town. But he's still a union printer who works on two or three extra jobs to keep his family together, because they can't eat the roomful of trophies and medals he has won.

And in the B.A.A. race, medals were what he got. For no one gets a dime on Patriots' Day. Other marathons are sponsored with some ulterior motive, but the B.A.A. race is purely a sentimental gesture on the part of Colonel Walter A. Brown, general manager of the Boston Garden, in memory of his father, the late George V. Brown, who supported the race forty years.

The Boston Athletic Association, as an active organization, has deteriorated into little more than a name, but Brown keeps that name alive by running the marathon and just one other event—an indoor track meet that makes enough money to support the distance race. A cash outlay of approximately $2,000 is involved, but the time and energy of the race managers cannot be measured in dollars and cents. They are motivated by the same inexplicable enthusiasm that grips the runners.

Semple, who came from Scotland at nineteen and has been running marathons ever since, comes closest to explaining it when he says, "The B.A.A. race is the Kentucky Derby of distance running. It's the blue-ribbon event, and runners would rather win in Boston than any other place, even though the prizes are not the best and the course is not the toughest. A tenth place in the B.A.A. race commands more respect than a first in any other event except the Olympic marathon itself."

That's probably why old Bill Kennedy rode the rods from Chicago, slept on a pool table until he could borrow ten dollars from a Boston sports writer, kept himself going for two weeks by laying bricks, and then won the 1917 race.

Maybe that's why the late Pat Dengis, a highly skilled aircraft technician, took time off from his work in Baltimore to shoot for the B.A.A. crown. Pat won every other race in America, but the best he could do in Boston was second. His death in a crash on a test flight in 1938 thwarted his lifelong ambition.

That, too, is probably the reason why a highly intelligent man like Lou Gregory, principal of Manlius, New York, High School until he went into the Navy as a full lieutenant, kept returning to Boston year after year in the hope that he could add the B.A.A. marathon title to his list of eighteen national championships at all distances from six to twenty miles.

It's almost athletic blasphemy to mention names of such scholars and gentlemen with that of a character like Johnny "Cigars" Connors, who claimed he chain-smoked 100 cigars in the course of the race. The association, however, may explain the marathon's peculiar place in the American scene. For forty-nine years the race has been run, and for forty-nine years people have been trying to establish some norm.

IN 1925, anti-prohibitionists had a field day because the winner was the hard-drinking, heavy-smoking Chuck Mellor. He freely admitted that he liked his bottle and explained that during the race he had swallowed the juice from a whole plug of tobacco "because it kept my insides warm."

The very next year the prohibitionists were back on top, for a twenty-year-old grocery clerk from Sydney Mines, Nova Scotia—Johnny Miles by name—came down for a surprise victory and proudly proclaimed that he neither smoked nor drank. Clean living had triumphed again.

The medical profession has always been interested in B.A.A. marathon runners for a number of reasons, mostly physical. No psychiatrists have ever had a chance to probe the mental side of the marathoners, possibly because the subject would be too big to tackle. In 1928, a three-man group from the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, comprising Dr. S. A. Levine of Boston, Dr. Burgess Gordon of Spokane, Washington, and Dr. Albert Wilmaers of Belgium, conducted a series of tests at the marathon's finish line designed to show whether the race caused "athlete's heart."

"The surprising thing in our results was that the heart in no case became any larger as a result of the race, but in a number of instances became smaller," Dr. Levine told newspapermen. "This is diametrically opposed to the old view that dilation of the heart is apt to follow over-exertion."

An even more comprehensive study was carried out for three successive years by six-man medical teams from the Fatigue Laboratory of the Harvard Business School under the direction of Dr. David B.

(*Continued on page 52*)

Preacher of the Woods

Josiah Swift is a week-end walker, and in his wake you will usually find several hundred city slickers trying to capture the spiritual magic this man gets out of a walk in the woods

BY LEWIS B. FUNKE

LIBERTY PHOTOS BY HOWARD L. LURAY

Manhattan's Central Park often serves as rustic rendezvous for Swift and his Yosians.

JOSIAH OTIS SWIFT, father of the Yosian Brotherhood, world's largest organization of nature lovers, probably has led more folks wandering through the wilderness than any one man since Moses.

For Swift can do more with a walk in the woods than Barnum could do with a circus. Dedicated to helping pavement pounders forget their workaday worries, he makes an ordinary three-mile stroll seem like a hegira to Olympus, a digest of Gray's Botany, and a Cook's tour of Walden all rolled into one. He travels with short steady steps, jabbers endlessly through a small weather-beaten megaphone, and darts hither and yon like a man on a pogo stick. He sees a bough of autumn-colored leaves and recalls that his grandmother used them for dyeing clothes; spots a patch of moly and explains that is wild garlic, the plant that helped Ulysses break the spell of the charmer, Circe; notes a fallen hickory limb and reflects that it made America great—"taught us readin', writin', and 'rithmetic." He is as likely to ask for absolute silence so that one and all may hear elves waltzing in the underbrush, as to proclaim that he is about to lead a conquest of the "Garden of the Hesperides beyond the River of Doubt and the Plains of Disappointment."

As nature editor of the New York World-Telegram, Swift writes a daily column, News Outside the Door—a five- or six-paragraph morsel devoted to the glories of the woodland trail. Saturdays and Sundays he battles those big-city blues by taking sundry citizens for country walks. As self-ordained drummer for the birds, bees, and flowers, and walking guide to Yosians, nuns, Negro social organizations, refugees, and sanitarium inmates suffering from nervous breakdowns, he has trudged some 100,000 miles in almost a quarter of a century.

Known to intimates as the Sassafras Hawk and to several hundred thousand Americans as the layman's Thoreau, Swift is a seventy-four-year-old Maine Yankee who looks like a cross between a Columbus Circle missionary and the kind of minister for whom female parishioners bake cake. He says men's minds were not made to cope with modern complexities, and regards the machine age with the fishy eye of a man who has found tongues in trees, books in brooks, and sermons in stones.

HE is fond of injecting the inspirational note during walks, especially on Sundays. He tabs a boulder a Rock of Introspection or the Wishing Stone, asks the assembly to sit within its shadow and regales them with such texts as "How Self Is Man's Worst Nemesis," or "How Man Can Achieve if He Wishes Hard Enough." At the close of a walk he often recites the Yosian benediction, which begins: "And now may the blessing of Mother Nature go with you and remain until we meet again. May you find her peace in your hearts whether you be in the market place or in the silence under the greenwood tree. . . ."

Occasionally Swift's rustic hocus-pocus achieves balsamic results beyond even his own fondest hopes.

Not long ago he was awakened by a hysterical woman screaming over the telephone that her husband had not returned from the day's excursion. Swift donned his clothes and traipsed diligently over the path he had walked that afternoon. He soon found the absentee perched on a stone gazing at the moon. "He had decided to stay and commune with the universe," Swift beams. Another time an earnest young stenographer, after listening to one of his more eloquent sermons on wishing, placed her hands on the "Wishing Stone" and proceeded to give a reasonably accurate facsimile of Buddhistic devotion. When she turned up on a subsequent outing, she planted a kiss on his cheek and blurted, "I think that stone is marvelous. I'm now the boss's secretary."

SWIFT'S columns, like his walks, are a potpourri of fact, fiction, and philosophy, though on the typewriter he is inclined to grow even more lyrical. Readers, some of whom ask the World-Telegram to issue News Outside the Door in book form so that it may be read along with the Bible, are devoted to such passages as "In the black muck of a thousand muddy streams in New Jersey, Long Island, and Westchester the skunk cabbage, *Symplocarpus foetidus,* is pushing up sharp awls which later will be broad green leaves, smelling, when crushed, like a skunk."

His writings are filled with blasts at the contemporary scene. He emphasizes the possibility of civilization's crack-up and our having to live in caves and eat reindeer steaks garnished with rock tripe. He consoles his fellow nature philosophers with the fact that Mother Nature continues to cultivate the bouncing Bet, "used by our ancestors to make soap, because she knows that after the fall of our modern Babylon we won't have energy or brains enough left to make soap from ashes." He buoyantly notes that winter cress still grows and that "after the Democrats, Republicans, and Communists all have defeated one another, our descendants, like Nebuchadnezzar, will fill their bellies with the grass of the fields."

Before Pearl Harbor, Swift tried to ignore the war. He advised Yosians to stop reading war reports and to shut off the radio. When we became engaged in the conflict, he relinquished his isolation. He told his readers to adopt the "long geological view of things"; that although "Man was making bombs for Armageddon, Nature was making billions of buds to bring about the millennium."

Swift has been writing News Outside the Door and taking walks with Yosians since 1922, when he was on the staff of the old New York World. A general news reporter and rewrite man, he had won the heart of the late Joseph Pulitzer, publisher of the paper, as well as most of the bonuses Pulitzer offered for the best nature stories of the week. Swift says, "I always did my best to introduce nature into my stories," a practice, incidentally, that had an odd way of creeping into even his murder stories. Old World men shudder at their recollections of Swift phoning in that the victim's body had been found at the foot of a *Pinus echinata* or on a bed of *Gaultheria procumbens.*

For years Swift lived in the Bronx and virtually had a standing assignment to haunt the borough's famous zoo for weekly yarns on the menagerie's inhabitants. Once, while Pulitzer was vacationing aboard his yacht in the Caribbean, he noticed what he considered a skimpy animal story in the New York Times. He cabled his office, "Have Swift go to Brooklyn and interview woman with six cats." Swift modestly adds, "I guess I was Mr. Pulitzer's right-hand animal man."

When Herbert Bayard Swope, managing editor of the paper, decided that the editorial page could use a breath of fresh air in the form of a daily nature story, Swift was the logical choice. Swift, of course, hopped on the assignment like a fox on a rabbit. He studied books on botany, ornithology, mythology, and philosophy; took long walks, smelled herbs, listened to bird calls, and struck up a speaking acquaintance with the greater and lesser fays of the woodlands.

References to these walks crept into the column, but Swift says, "When I wanted to say something poetical or idealistic, I was stumped. I had a horror of too much first person singular. I hit on the solution by prefacing my remarks with some phrase like 'According to the ancient philosophers of the Order of Yosiah,' or 'As the Yosians had it . . .' " Swift made up the word Yosian (accent on the *si*) out of his first name Josiah. The invention sounded so good, the New York Botanical Garden called for the address of the Yosian Brotherhood to help it with a botanical problem. Funk and Wagnall's, the dictionary people, requested a derivation.

SWIFT also began receiving letters and calls from World readers who wished to walk with the Yosians. He would tell them the Yosians were purely the figment of his imagination but that they could join him at some rustic rendezvous. After several weeks Swift approached Swope with the suggestion that the World print a general invitation to the public. Swope, who could detect a circulation builder as well as the next man, quickly agreed. Fifty persons turned up the first Sunday, and since most of them could quote the sayings of the Ancient Order of Yosiah, they founded the Yosians then and there. One hundred persons were present the following Sabbath, and a few Sundays later there were 500. "By the time I finished that walk," Swift remembers, "lots of people hadn't even started. I decided that the Yosians would have to be split up."

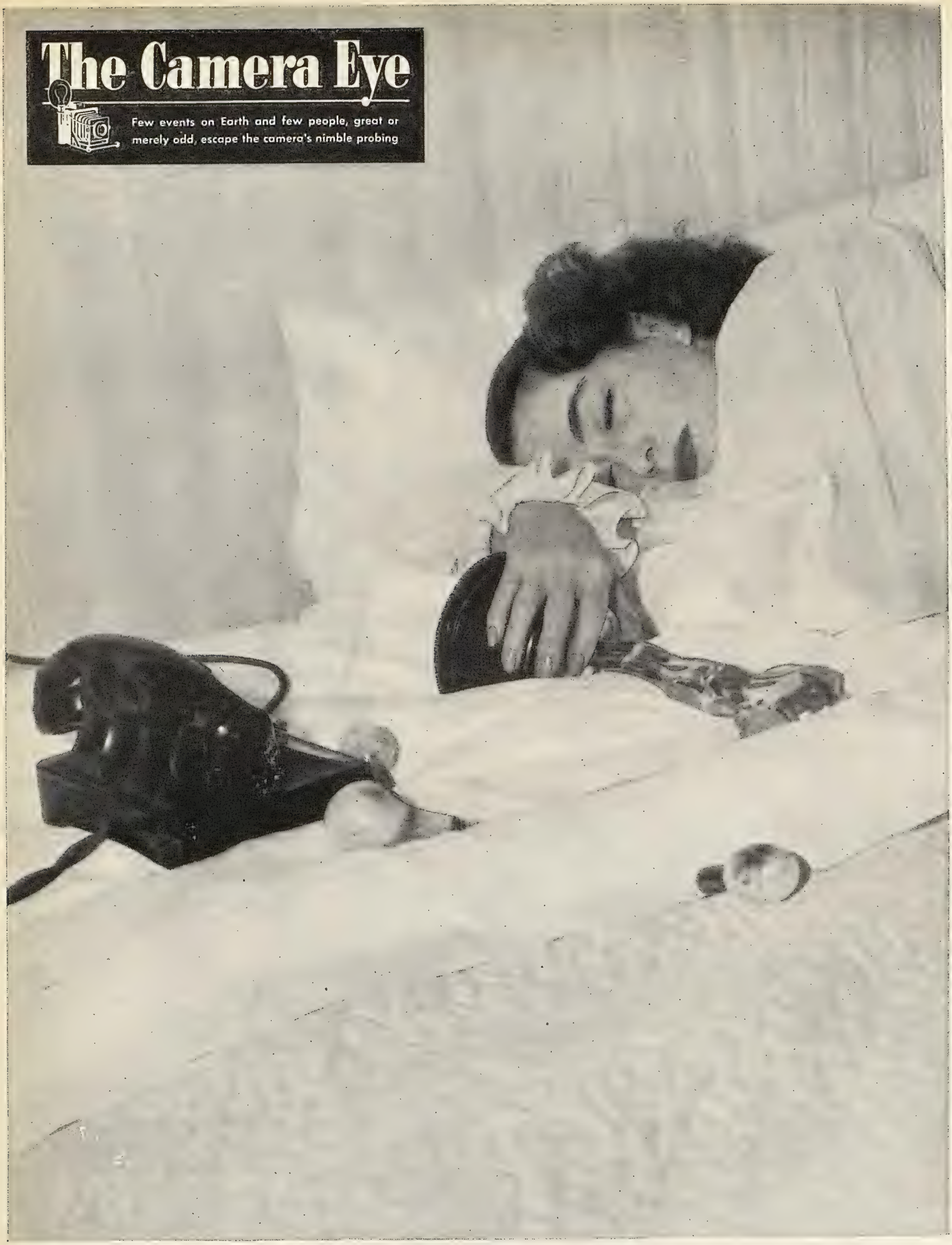
Today, besides the parent Yosian Brotherhood, to which Swift gives most of his attention, there are about thirty or forty subdivisions, including such specialized groups as the Yosian Psychology Club, which walks and talks about problems like How to Overcome an Inferiority Complex. Any member of a sub-

(*Continued on page 80*)

Swift expounds his creed: "We seek Jehovah on the mountaintops."

The Camera Eye

Few events on Earth and few people, great or merely odd, escape the camera's nimble probing



LIBERTY PHOTO BY JACK ALBIN

A TIRED LITTLE GIRL AND HER DOLL—Joan Crawford was abed with the flu and a 102 fever when they handed her the Academy Award. Then for hours her friends phoned congratulations and cameramen inundated her with flash bulbs. When they had finished, a happy star dropped into a sleep of complete exhaustion.

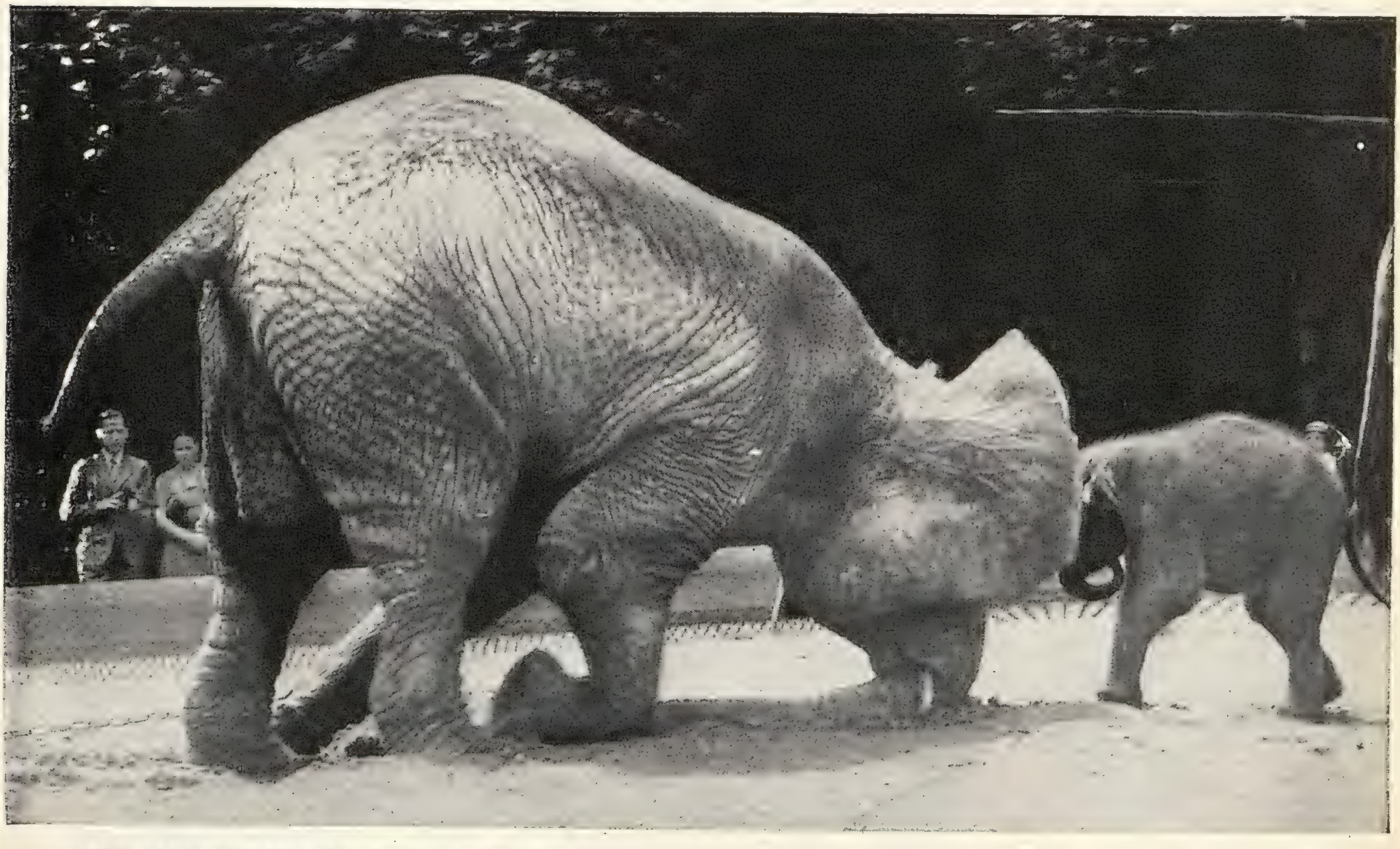
NO VACANCIES

SITUATION'S CUCKOO—A waggish photographer used a sign for a prop in Chicago's Lincoln Park, and lo and behold—he had a picture. And at that, the place would rent if it were bigger.

INTERNATIONAL

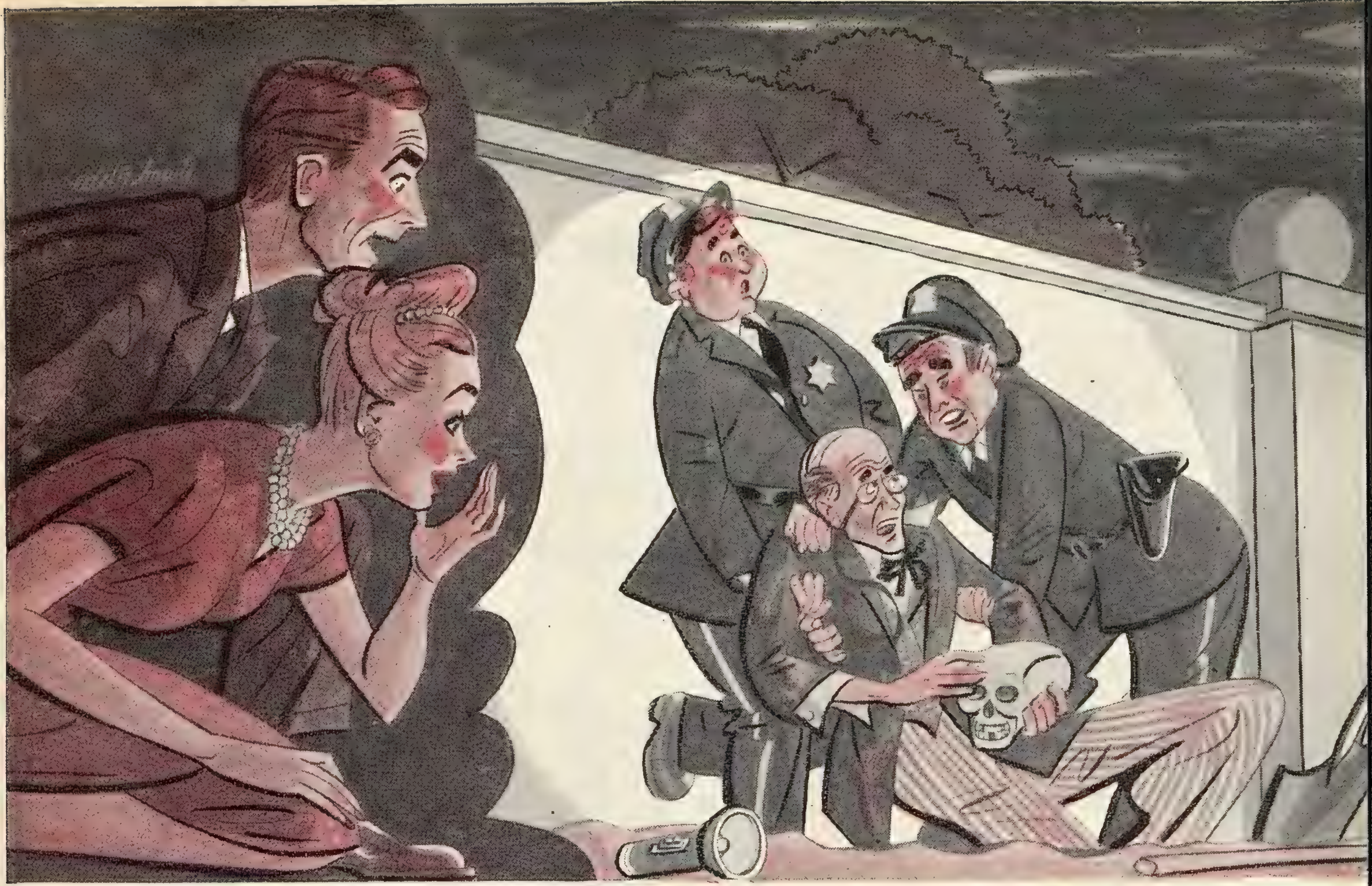
WELL, IT'S DECORATIVE—The movie men always have a camera ready when girls like Rebel Randall dress like this for tennis. And girls like her never fail to produce a smile.

INTERNATIONAL



LISTEN HERE, SQUIRT!—We wouldn't know what Junior did to rate this dressing-down, but Mom's sore. Her every line shows that she's giving Sonny a blistering he won't forget in a hurry. And if an elephant can assume a hangdog expression, Junior has it

EUROPEAN



Two of the policemen hauled Manstead out of the pit. "My skull,

From the day Dr. Manstead arrived at the university, there was trouble. First his secrecy; then that long-limbed blonde who didn't look like an anthropologist at all; and now this business of driving a steam roller and dropping skulls in graveyards

THE whole affair has been greatly distorted by the newspapers, much to the annoyance of the university, but I hope this will set matters right.

It is perfectly true that Dr. Yellon, head of our department of anthropology, drove a steam roller down the streets of Cambridge late one night. But it was absurd to say he had stolen it. It was simply borrowed for an hour or two. Nor was our visiting colleague, Dr. Manstead, rifling a cemetery in search of skulls. He was merely looking for one he had dropped. But you can hardly be expected to accept these facts without a few thousand words of explanation.

On an evening last spring our department of anthropology was called into special session by Dr. Yellon; and a certain request was laid before us in a letter from abroad. It seemed that a Dr. Raymond Manstead had made, while he was in Chinese Turkestan, some unusual finds which he wished to explore at his leisure. War conditions had closed his own European laboratories and he wondered if our museum would be willing to extend its facilities to him; in which case his various finds would be shipped immediately.

Now, Dr. Manstead was personally unknown to us, though we were familiar with his work. I myself considered his methods brilliant but slipshod. Nevertheless I was more than willing to examine his material, one specimen in particular. And as I looked around the room I could see the same feeling reflected. In fact, I remarked to myself how much, at certain moments, a roomful of anthropologists resembles a pack of wolves. As my own specialty is physical anthropology, it doubtless colors my reactions.

"Manstead," Dr. Yellon went on dreamily, glancing again at the letter, "must be younger than we supposed, for he mentions his fiancée, who lives in Canada. She is a Dr. Mildred Dufrater, anthropologist."

There was a dead silence. The very idea of a female anthropologist was one we preferred to pass over as quickly as possible. But we were quick to catch Dr. Yellon's implication. If Dr. Manstead were young enough to be engaged for the first time, then he might be young enough to prove—docile. I hoped Dr. Yellon's conclusion was correct. It was not.

Dr. Manstead arrived, a pasty bespectacled gentleman of fifty with a hard, tight mouth. That first afternoon he busied himself overseeing the disposal of his material. Several heavy crates went up on our freight elevator to the museum's sixth floor, including a half-ton block of stone. Finally, with the only keys to the sixth floor swinging from his hand, Dr. Manstead made his selfish intentions known to those of us who had gathered to greet him.

"Gentlemen," he said, and there was a frosty attempt at a smile, "I

Skulduggery

BY MARJORIE CARLETON

ILLUSTRATED BY EDDIE BOWIE

my skull!" he cried. An astonished silence greeted his words.

am deeply grateful to the department for its generosity in offering these facilities. You may be sure that before any of my conclusions go into actual print, I shall invite you all to examine"—we hung on his words—"the galley proofs!"

The heavy doors swung shut, and there we stood in the corridor, staring at one another with varying expressions of anger and frustration. Dr. Dana set the tone. A polished aristocrat, famous for his loving precision with the English language, he commented quietly, "Why, the chap is a louse!"

"I never thought much of him in the first place," Cathermire said violently. "Moving material from its natural locale before the geologists have had a chance at it! *Fine* thing, excavating in cupboards!"

I defended Manstead reluctantly. "His affairs at home needed immediate attention. Yet he didn't dare leave the material in Turkestan unprotected. I hardly see what else he could have done."

But Dr. Yellon only said reflectively, "I should have kept the third key, the janitor's key."

We went sadly on our separate ways, each of us, I suppose, thinking of one thing: the Skull, the long-sought-for prehistoric skull that was somewhere up on the sixth floor; the skull that Manstead, in the first flush of triumph, had definitely announced in his letter, but which, safely in America, he refused to display or even discuss. The measurements of that skull were of the greatest importance to my own proposed monograph, but I was even sorrier for Yellon. He had held up his latest book, already extensively advertised, until he could examine that skull.

MATTERS did not improve. For many weeks members of the department were seen to skulk about the sixth floor of the museum, waiting to pounce on Manstead with honeyed smiles. But it did no good. He always locked the doors before he came fully into the corridor, and he never asked anyone into his laboratory. Even when, in desperation, we sent for Jedlicka, it did no good. Yes, Professor Jedlicka, anthropology's most shining ornament and a very old man, actually came on from the West at Yellon's plea.

"We might have spared him the trip," Yellon said to me bitterly next day. "Manstead wouldn't invite him to see the skull. He took him out to a tavern instead—and let Jedlicka pay for the beers." We stared at each other, horrified. "I've only one shot left. I've sent for his fiancée."

"She may be as bad as Manstead."

"Come, come, Stoddard," he said impatiently, "there is nothing beyond the ultimate. How could two Mansteads be worse than one?" He left and I turned toward my office. Then, glancing down the corridor, I halted. The girl coming toward me must be Cathermire's new secretary. I knew every one of the other workers in the museum, for all of them had lent themselves good-naturedly to the anthropometrical study that is part of my work.

This female was slim and long-limbed, with masses of yellow hair piled carelessly on top of her head.

"So you're Professor Cathermire's new secretary?" I said pleasantly. "I'm Dr. Stoddard, department of physical anthropology. Just step in here a moment while I find my calipers. It won't hurt." I added this hastily, for my old charwoman had been a bit difficult until I explained that calipers were merely instruments for measuring her skull and were not forceps to remove her remaining three molars. But this young woman only smiled broadly.

"Let me save you the trouble, Dr. Stoddard. "I'm twenty-six, female, white. Mediterraneum-Nordic with slight admixture of Alpine. My friends call me Blondy."

(*Continued on page 54*)

Margit

Margit was wise and wonderful and unafraid in a world which cowed her mama—but, then, Margit was different from any child who had ever lived

BY ELEANOR BUCKLES

ILLUSTRATED BY GRIFFITH FOXLEY

Liberty's
SHORT SHORT
STORY

WE boys and Papa were all twice as big as Mama, and in the midst of us she always looked buffeted. Strangers were apt to marvel that such a small delicate woman had produced four big husky sons, and Mama would tell them immediately about Margit.

"The boys? You should see their sister!" Mama would say. "Nearly as tall as her brothers, long-legged and broad-shouldered on account of her American upbringing, the equal of any man in the family."

The strangers would have learned a great deal about Margit before they discovered that this information was purely hypothetical. Margit had died within an hour of her birth.

I do not remember hearing so much about her when we lived in Hungary, but after we moved to America, Mama mentioned Margit more and more frequently. It was too late in Mama's sheltered life for bold self-assertion, but she found her voice through Margit. Mama had been reared to be timid and helpless in a man's world; but Margit, brought up in the free-and-easy atmosphere of Long Island, would know how to exercise her American woman's rights with spirit.

"Poor Papa," Margit would say mockingly, through Mama of course—"poor Papa and his generation had everything their own way. Didn't know how much more fun they could have had if they had known that women are people!"

We really loved Mama, but it was easy to forget her in the excitement of living with Papa. For many years I flatly refused to believe the facts my brothers told me about the way babies are brought about, because I simply could not visualize my mother and father involved together in any such enterprise.

Papa had a wonderful red beard, a roaring belly laugh, and a step that made the china dance on the shelves when he walked through the house. Mama seemed to patter around at about his waist height. Her hair was light brown and feathery, and her shortsighted eyes were pale blue, with an expression of tentative alarm.

If she ventured to speak her mind without Margit as a shield, her hands would flutter to her mouth as if frightened by what she had said.

My mother's deference to male sovereignty was a continuation of the life she had known before her marriage. Brought up by a widower in a family of boys, she had been sternly protected from the dangers and pleasures of real life. This background made it difficult for her to assert herself.

Tradition placed a heavy obligation on Mama to make her first-born child a boy, to ensure a son and heir. Family interest fastened briefly on Mama for this event, then quickly turned away when the outcome proved tragic. The dead baby was buried before Mama regained consciousness from the ordeal, but she named the little girl Margit. Then came boys, one after another, and Papa might have forgotten his first-born if Mama had not developed a nostalgia for her lost daughter which grew sharper with the years.

The lovely thing about Margit was that, despite her headstrong self-confidence, her almost impudent self-assertion, she looked to Mama for advice in many things. She might have attended a finishing school in Connecticut in the company of two girl cousins, but Mama said firmly, "Margit wouldn't want to be isolated from boys during these important adolescent years. As a preparation for real life, it would be unnatural." When a scandal broke out in the finishing school and the two girl cousins were yanked home, Margit's—or Mama's—judgment was vindicated.

In politics, Margit was way ahead of Papa, who arrogantly clung to old-fashioned doctrines of class and wealth. Although Margit was not old enough to vote in the 1932 elections, she strongly disapproved of Papa's vote for Mr. Hoover. "You're just digging your own grave," she told him. "Something has to be done to bring some of the wealth back down to the broader levels of circulation, or pretty soon there won't be any top level for you to enjoy. Mr. Hoover isn't going to do it, you can be sure."

(In speaking of Margit, I find myself confusing tenses as my mother did. I say that Margit "said," or "did," or "was," rather than Margit "might have said," "might have done," or "would have been." She lived in our house as surely as I lived there, and her vivid personality actually occupied space within the rooms.)

Mama set out early the morning of the election, firm in her intention to cancel Papa's vote with her own. She came home hours later, covered with shame. She had been walking up and down in front of the polling place, trying vainly to find the courage to go in and ask for a ballot. Papa's vote went uncanceled.

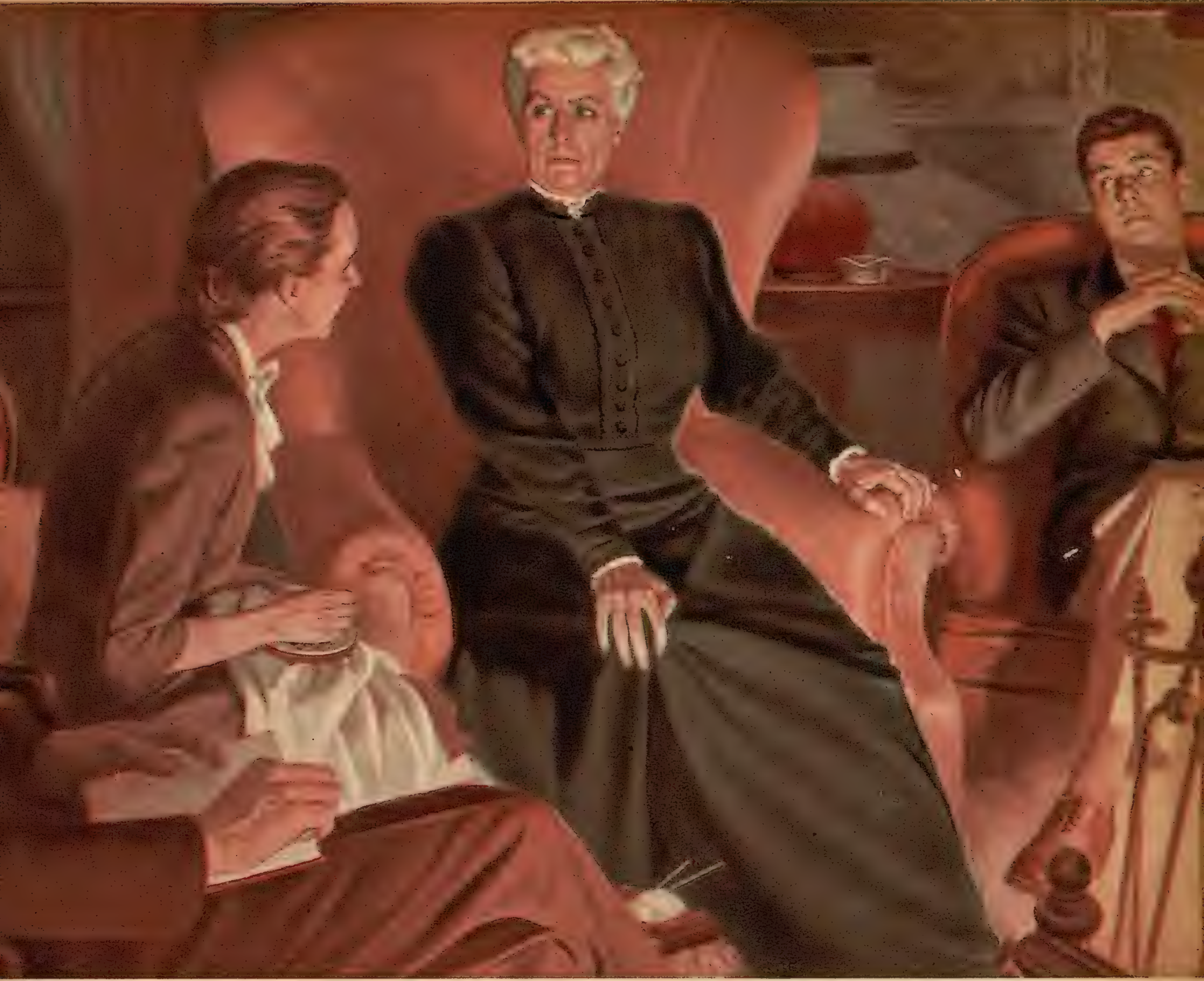
It was different in 1936. Margit had attained her majority. Mama was the first voter in our precinct to cast a ballot on election day.

Papa was astonished and quite peeved about it. "You couldn't bear arms in defense of the country, could you," he roared at Mama, "then why should you have a say in the government?"

"You're forty-six and the father of five children yourself," Mama answered him. "They wouldn't take you in the Army if you paid them to." Just let Papa try and tell Margit that a woman shouldn't vote!

IT was due to Margit's foresight that our grandmother was brought to America. Margit—who had deplored the democracies' failure to prevent Japanese aggression in Manchuria, had issued bold warnings on the Italian campaign in Abyssinia—insisted that Munich was cause for alarm. It was Papa's nature to ridicule all "alarmism," as he called it, and he would have roared with laughter at the idea that Margit could influence him. Nevertheless, he instructed his mother to get out of Europe.

Any notion we might have had that the grandmother would prove a sweet and sympathetic female companion for Mama was dispelled by one look at the old lady. She was tall and ramrod-straight, with a quick tongue and a dominating manner. Although she could manage with English, she insisted on speaking Hungarian, even to Americans. My



"I've been thinking about Margit's getting married," Mama ventured in Hungarian with her gentle stammer. "I don't favor early marriages, but Margit is twenty-four now and that's not too soon to think about it."

brothers and I deeply resented this, and our conversations with her were a strange English-Hungarian goulash. We had to call her *Nagymama*.

Within three days of her arrival the gay atmosphere of our house had given way to rebellion. Alex and Bundy muttered threats of getting an apartment for themselves in Manhattan. Nicky spoke openly of making a trip out West. I found myself wishing darkly that Margit were really there, to put the sharp-tongued old woman in her place.

On the fourth evening, we sat in an unwilling but obedient family circle around the big fireplace. Mama embroidered, and my brothers and I restlessly refrained from smoking in compliance with our grandmother's demands. Papa had discovered urgent business in Albany and was well out of reach.

Mama seemed least affected by the grandmother's presence. I suppose that one despot more or less in her life was nothing special. She made conversation about the nice young people the boys sometimes brought home. "I've been thinking about Margit's getting married," she ventured in Hungarian with her gentle stammer. "I certainly don't favor early marriages, but Margit is twenty-four now and that's not too soon to think about it. There have been some lovely boys here at the house, and I wonder which of them would suit Margit best."

"Margit!" *Nagymama* broke in sharply. "Who's this Margit?"

Mama looked up in surprise and then remembered how long the family had been away from Europe. "Margit — you remember — our daughter."

"Daughter! You never had a daughter!"

"You've forgotten, *Nagymama*. The baby who died."

The old woman's eyebrows gathered in a frown, then parted as she slowly comprehended. "My heavens, didn't Cornel ever tell you? That baby wasn't a girl! It was a boy!"

"But you told me"—Mama formed the words with an effort—"you told me it was a girl."

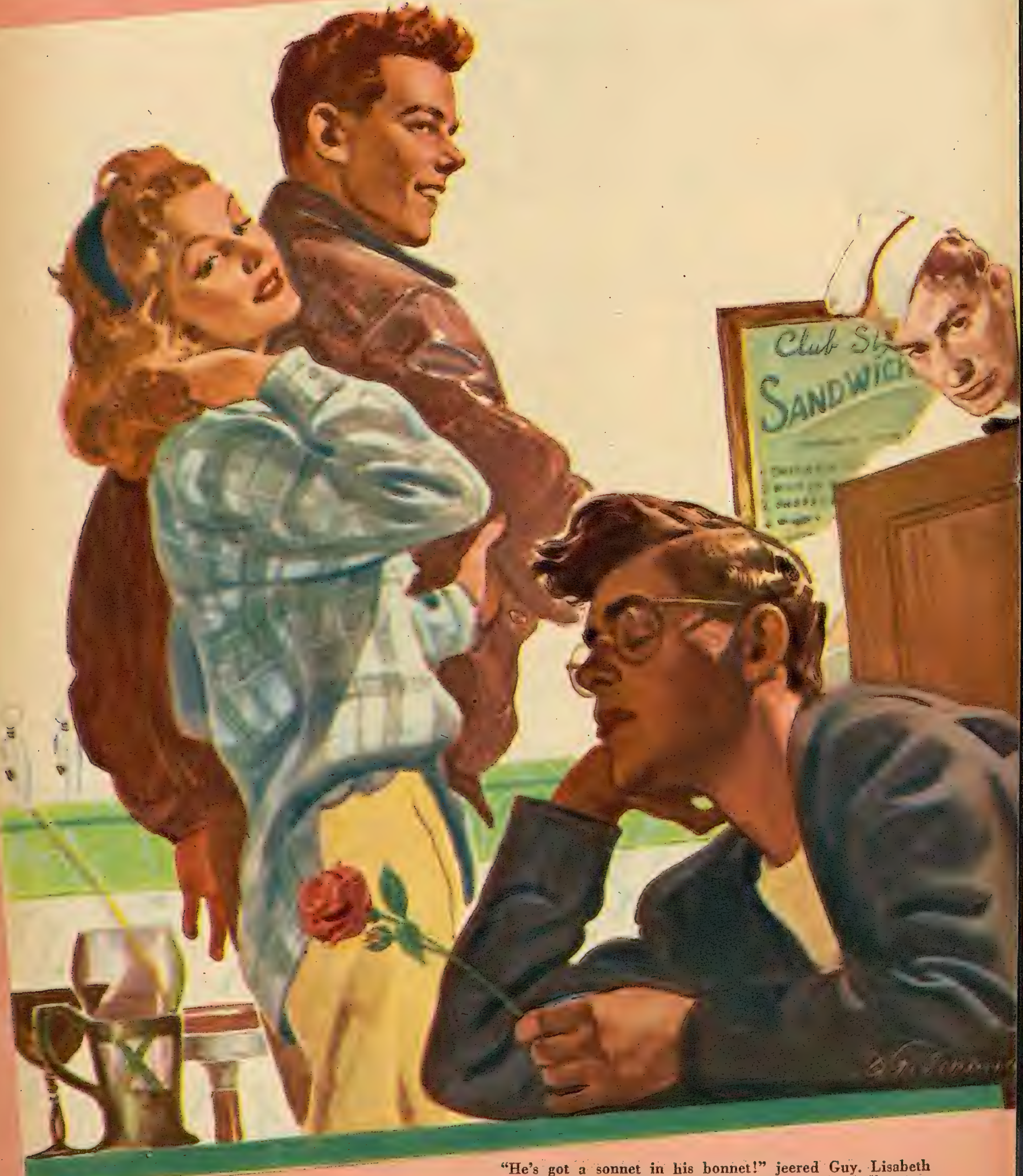
"Oh, nonsense! We told you it was a girl so you wouldn't grieve too much, so you wouldn't think the loss was so great."

There was a moment of stunned silence. Then my mother folded her embroidery and quietly left the room.

My bedroom was next to Mama's. All night long I heard her weeping, while I lay helpless on the other side of the wall and wished I could kill the thoughtless cruel old woman. I have heard many terrible sounds since then, the awful sounds of war, but I can never forget the sound of my mother's soft heartbroken grieving for Margit.

THE END

It Could Be


Club St
SANDWIC

"He's got a sonnet in his bonnet!" jeered Guy. Lisabeth gave Percy a look that was half flirtatious, half challenging.

Verse

BY ALLAN R. BOSWORTH

ILLUSTRATED BY O. F. SCHMIDT

PERCY BRACY came whistling down Elm Street, a lanky and bespectacled youth in reasonable health and spirits, concerned at the moment with nothing more serious than a double malted thick enough to get his teeth into. Then he paused to admire a pair of turquoise earrings in the window of Duncan's Jewelry Shoppe, and life began to be a problem. He was reminded that Lisabeth's birthday would be next month. The earrings—he groped for a word—would make her look svelte. But they were thirty dollars.

The inner man cried out that the double malted and a glorified hamburger could be obtained for thirty cents, and Percy went on to Schnable's Confectionery, but he was whistling no longer. And when he peered through the window, the pangs of hunger gave way to those of violent jealousy.

Lisabeth Morton sat with Guy O'Higgins in the nearest booth, their heads close together over a newspaper, their own double malteds forgotten. Percy might have charitably assumed that they were reading about the latest exploits of the "barefoot burglar"—an industrious second-story man who had the town by the ears—but he saw the redheaded Guy scribbling something. Tender messages, no doubt.

He would have turned away then, to nurse hunger and heartache elsewhere, but Lisabeth looked up.

"My aching back!" she cried. "It's Percy! Hey, Perc—come give with the verse!"

This made no more sense than most of Lisabeth's speech, but she emphasized it with a beckoning gesture and a coquettish come-hither look. Even with the tail of a plaid shirt draped outside her turned-up jeans, Lisabeth inspired breathlessness.

Percy went meekly inside. Guy waved his pencil airily.

"Hi, Perc!" he greeted his rival. "Fifty bucks reward! Squat, chum!"

Percy squatted. "You mean for the barefoot burglar?" he asked.

"Barefoot burglar my aching back!" Lisabeth scoffed. "That's a job for the police. This is something that takes brains. Look—a limerick contest in the city paper. Fifty dollars for the best last line. Guy already has two figured out."

"I'm a poet and don't know it!" Guy chortled, and Lisabeth gave him an admiring glance. "I rhyme all the time! Perc—you ought to be good at this. I mean, you've been studying English Lit. How about it?"

"Ye gods!" exclaimed Percy. "Are you comparing English poetry with *limericks*? Why, that's—that's sacrilege!"

Lisabeth regarded him coldly. Her eyes, he discovered, were just the color of those thirty-dollar earrings.

"The Tribune pays fifty dollars every day for the best last line," she reminded him. "That's not sacrilege—and it ain't hay, either! Even dad sent in a line last night."

Mr. Morton was a leading business man and a member of the town council. But Percy wasn't impressed. "I can't help it if he did," he said stubbornly. "The limerick is the lowest verse form. And besides, money never meant anything to any real poet!"

"It means something to this one, chum!" declared Guy O'Higgins, taking a gulp of malted milk. "Would I take the fifty bucks? Natch!"

Lisabeth laughed. "Guy is just horribly clever!" she said with an enthusiasm Percy found sickening. "Listen to this—it's the four lines of the limerick in today's Tribune:

"There was an old fellow named Breeze
Whose arms dangled down past his knees,
  He said, "Yes, my shape
  Makes me look like an ape—"

"Very amateurish!" Percy said scornfully.

"But you haven't heard Guy's last lines," Lisabeth rebuked. "He has two of them. One is, 'But I don't hang by a tail from the trees.' The other is, 'But I'm no kin to the chimpanzees.'"

"Humph!" grunted Percy. "Neither line scans, and apes don't have tails."

"Oh, my aching back!" Lisabeth exclaimed impatiently. "It's easy to criticize! Why don't *you* write a last line?"

"Because I'm not interested in limericks," Percy said loftily. "When I write verse, it'll be real poetry. Like To Autumn, by Keats. Or Shelley's—"

"He's got a sonnet in his bonnet!" jeered Guy. He got up abruptly. "I've got to scram—got to get these in the mail."

Lisabeth rose too. "I'll go with you, Guy," she said, and gave Percy an over-the-shoulder look that was half flirtatious, half challenging.

"Just a coke, I guess," Percy told the waitress moodily. He would never understand women. They were swayed by a bit of shallow cleverness, the transient ownership of material things, the impractical ability to dance well or throw a football. They scratched only

(*Continued on page 70*)

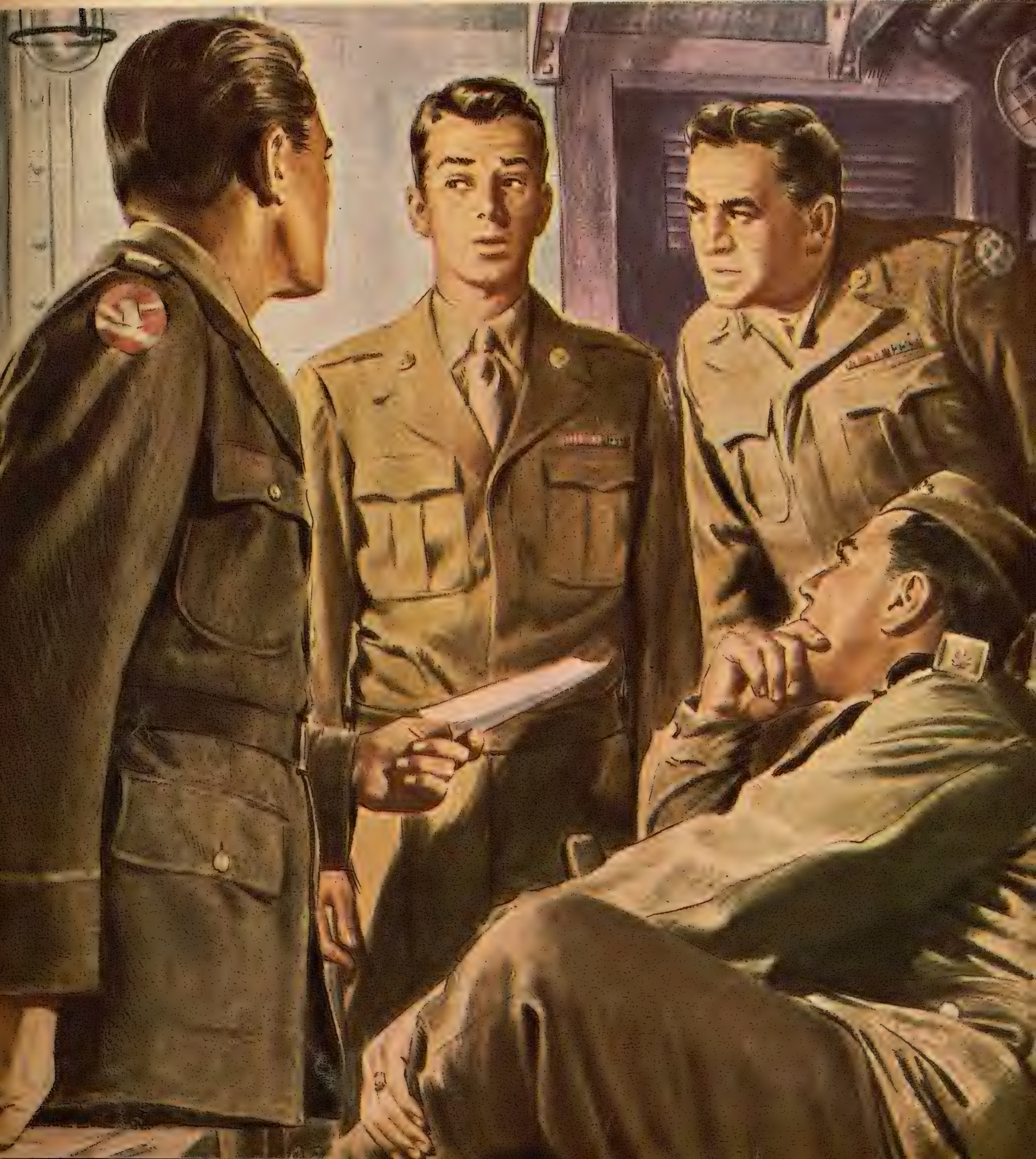
When a classic poet tries his hand at a limerick contest, anything can happen. But nobody would have believed that a single burning line from Percy's palpitating pen could have tumbled him headlong into Lisabeth's arms and won him fame in his own time

BIG-TIME OPERATION

BY MITCHELL WILSON

ILLUSTRATED BY LARRY KRITCHER

Abbot's head jerked up. It was a trap. They were leading him along gently. There was nothing he could deny.



Like a rat in a maze, Abbot was blocked everywhere he turned—haunted and hunted by a nameless terror. And now, exactly as it happened in his nightmare, the lieutenant said, "You! Come here."

She seemed to be asking, "Do I look all right? Will she like me?" That moment he loved her more than ever.

RESUME OF PART ONE

HOMEWARD bound from Europe on a troop ship, young Abbot, of the U. S. Army, held a big roll of American currency in his hand and wondered if he should throw it overboard. He was deeply troubled. During his months of service overseas where he had combined his job of playing the clarinet in the band with the duties of a stretcher-bearer, he had been proud to be associated with the men in his outfit. Especially Bob Levitan and Jack Sheriff, both professional musicians formerly with important bands. Abbot knew he would never forget Levitan, who had been killed by a sniper's bullet. Both Levitan and Sheriff were older men, with wives and families; they had helped the youngster and recently Sheriff had got Abbot the promise of a job in civilian life with his own orchestra leader. Abbot's future had seemed dazzling then; a good job meant he could marry Agnes and help his mother too.

Then he had become involved with boastful, self-styled big-shot O'Dowd and the "hot" money. The thing had happened while the men were on their way to the embarkation port. O'Dowd and Abbot had been marching together when a lieutenant in a jeep had stopped them. He ordered them to take charge of a line of driverless army trucks that were parked by the roadside, while he tried to round up the drivers. All day the two had waited, but no one came to take over. Finally, in a burst of angry impatience, O'Dowd went to get a drink at the near-by town. Half an hour later, he returned with a civilian, a Spaniard. "He's taking over," O'Dowd said. Not until he and Abbot were again on the move did he force the big roll of bills into Abbot's pocket, and then it was too late to protest.

On the ship Abbot could not rest. He knew he should report the matter. His guilty conscience forced him to avoid his friend Sheriff. He saw his whole future threatened. Desperately he got into a crap game with O'Dowd, half hoping to lose the money but he won instead. On deck later, Abbot heard a voice from the upper deck. He looked up. There stood the lieutenant who had ordered him and O'Dowd to guard the trucks. "You," the officer called to Abbot, "Come here!"

PART TWO—CONCLUSION

FOR one long moment Abbot wondered what would happen if he pretended that he hadn't heard the officer. But this encounter had happened so many times in his dreams that now the lieutenant's voice and his own response were inevitable.

Very slowly he gathered himself to attention. "Sir?"

The lieutenant beckoned to him with a slight nod. Abbot noticed another officer, a major, standing a little distance off. Having a witness, no matter how disinterested, gave Abbot a deepening helplessness. The lieutenant's question was directly aimed at Abbot.

"What outfit are you with?"

Without even being aware that he was doing so, Abbot replied truthfully.

The lieutenant shook his head, but his eyes were questioning. "Never came near them anywhere," he said. "Where'd you train?"

"Camp Lee."

Again the lieutenant shook his head. "You just looked familiar," he said, "and I can't place your face. Do I know you?" he asked directly.

"I don't think we ever saw each other before, sir," said Abbot slowly.

The major came up to the lieutenant. Beside the oak leaf, he wore chaplain's crosses. "Perhaps it's that on the way home," said the chaplain, "everyone looks like a friend."

THE door of the deckhouse burst open, and with it came apprehensive banging in Abbot's chest because O'Dowd stepped out on deck so that he couldn't see the officers.

"Come on," said O'Dowd. "What are you waiting for?"

The officers looked down at him, and then slowly O'Dowd turned because of the expression on Abbot's face. O'Dowd and the lieutenant looked at each other, and Abbot counted the seconds of silence. It was the chaplain who spoke first.

"What's your name?" he asked O'Dowd.

"O'Dowd, sir." He hesitated a moment, then softened the "sir" into "father."

The chaplain nodded. "St. Joseph's Home? Right? I thought I remembered."

"Yes, father," said O'Dowd. There was no fight in his voice.

"What kind of trouble are you in these days?" the chaplain asked. "You must have talked yourself into some kind of mess, or have you finally grown up?"

"Yes, father—no trouble at all, sir." But it was still the quiet O'Dowd who was talking, cautious, without a trace of bombast or fury.

"I don't know," said the lieutenant. "It's a funny thing! I could have sworn—" He shrugged and announced abruptly that he was going into the cabin. The major nodded to him, and turned again to O'Dowd.

"You and I ought to be having a little talk," he said.

"Yes, father, one of these days."

"Now's as good a time as any," the chaplain remarked. "Suppose you meet me in the chaplain's cabin, and you can bring me up to date."

He had a quiet, almost withdrawing manner of speaking, yet his eyes had such a penetrating intelligence that Abbot had no trouble understanding O'Dowd's submission. This new turn made O'Dowd an unpredictable quantity, and Abbot was uneasy.

"Who was that chaplain?" Abbot asked after the chaplain had gone.

"A priest I knew when I was a kid. I used to be in a home where he was. His name is Christisazza. I made my first confession to him."

"Are you going to see him?"

"You heard what he said."

"I heard the way you talked to him. He can walk all over you."

"Yeah?" O'Dowd's face tightened. "I can take care of myself, see? You're the one I'm worried about, not me."

"Sure," said Abbot. "But I'll stick around until you get back. I want to know what he says to you—and what you say to him."

He followed O'Dowd into the crowded deckhouse and saw him go past the M.P. on guard at the stairs which led to the upper deck. For a moment or two Abbot was reluctant to leave the stairwell, in the hope that O'Dowd would be returning immediately. But it was difficult to stand still, and Abbot drifted away, to look for Sheriff.

Sheriff was talking to several men, and Abbot placed himself on the

(*Continued on page 65*)

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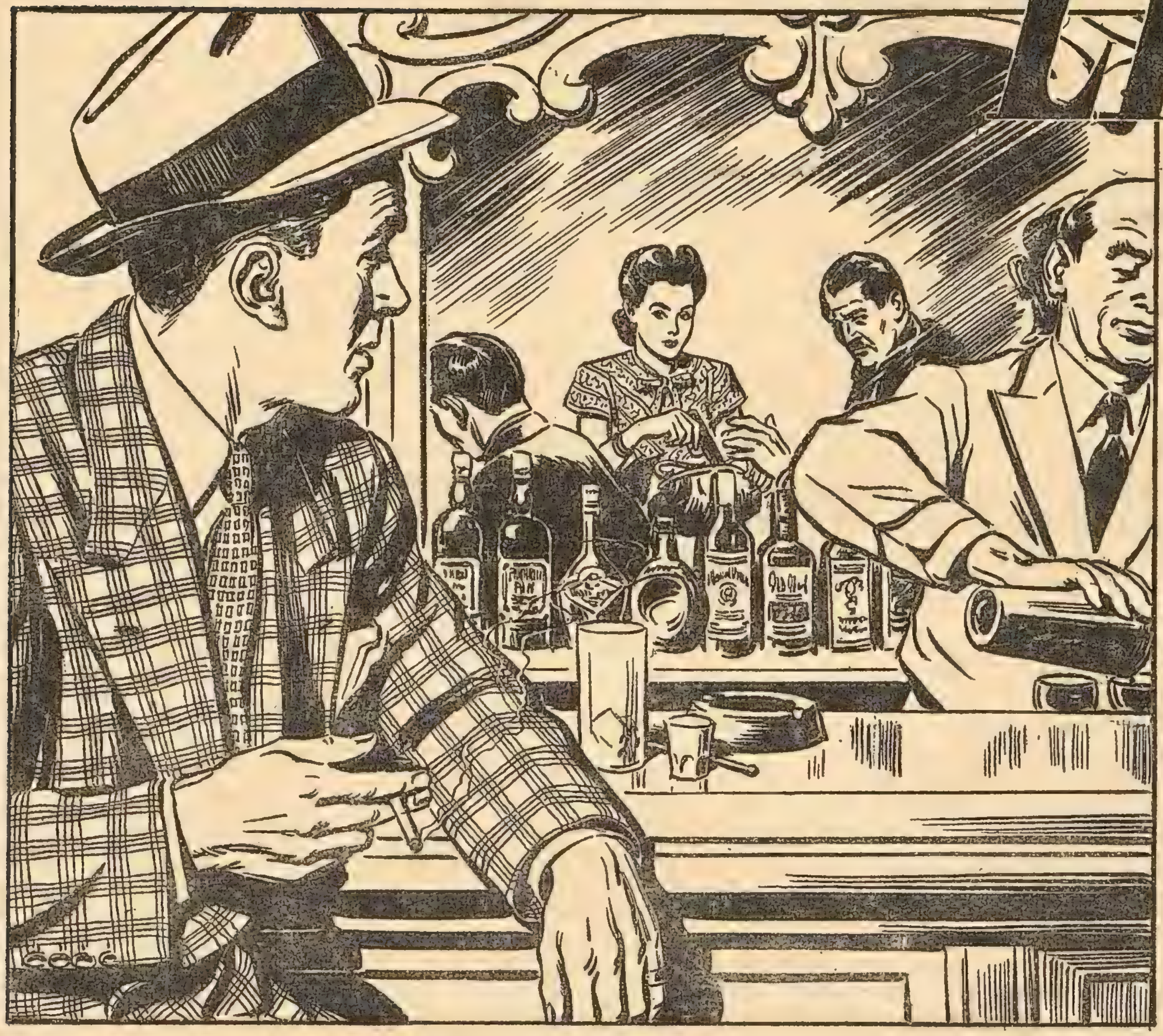
ONE ANGEL LESS

Called in to investigate a wealthy woman's mysterious illness, Detective Sidney Ames found himself facing a gun in the hands of a beautiful girl. This fast-moving murder mystery is packed with action and horror and love linked with danger.



BY H. W. RODEN

A
Liberty
BOOK
CONDENSATION
READING TIME
ONE EVENING

ILLUSTRATED BY
HOWELL DODD

MR. WATSON GREGORY shifted in his chair across the desk from Sidney Ames of the Sidney Ames Private Detective Agency. He was a slender, wiry little man of over sixty, average height and with a sharp face crowned by thinning gray hair. He made two or three false starts. Finally he managed, "This is a matter involving some considerable confidence, Mr. Ames. It's about my wife."

Ames thought, "Here it is again. Every husband who thinks his wife is cheating on him commences his spiel the same way."

"She's ill," Gregory went on. "At least, they've got her in a hospital."

"They?"

"Struve Jovene and— But perhaps I should tell you the whole story."

Watson Gregory inched his chair nearer the desk. Ames lit a cigarette, inhaled deeply, leaned back and appeared to go to sleep. Actually he was very much awake. Something in Gregory's manner intrigued him.

"Alicia—that's my wife—never had a sick day in her life," Gregory resumed. "She's just turned sixty. Besides, all her folks are long-lived. Why, her mother only died four years ago and she was ninety when she went." He added, "She left Alicia some money. Quite a bit."

"Rich women can—and usually do—indulge themselves in fancied illnesses," Ames remarked.

"Yes. I'm sure you're right. That's it, certainly."

Ames was positive that his visitor was about to rise. But Gregory settled back in his chair.

"Struve Jovene," he said, "is a banker and an old friend of the family. When my wife came into this money she quite naturally turned to him for advice in the handling of it. I've never been particularly good at that sort of

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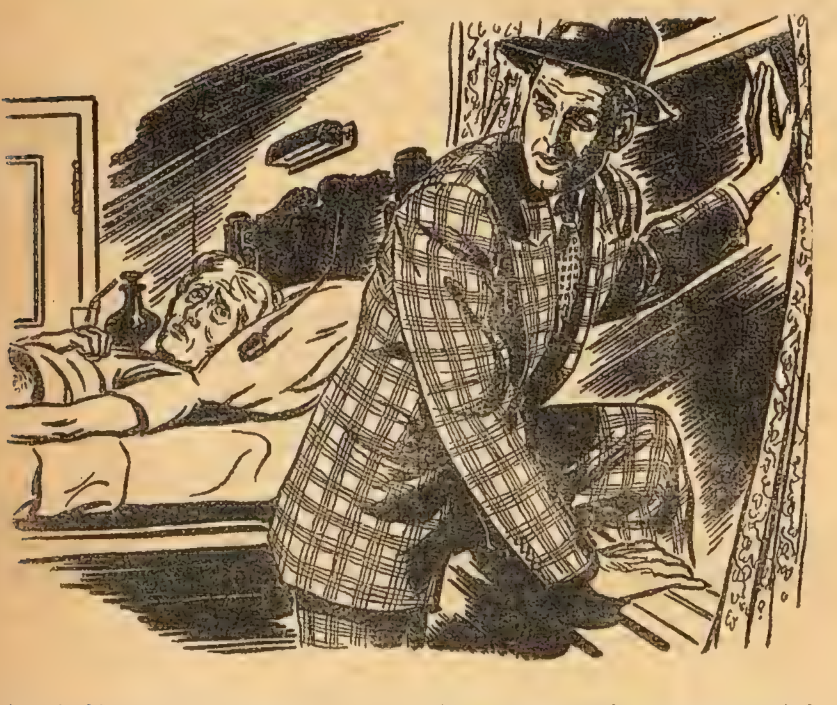
thing, so I wasn't consulted. A couple of years ago a foreigner came to town and opened a private hospital. He calls himself Dr. John Mastik. I have a feeling that Jovene had something to do with his coming. At any rate, he has been loud in his praise of Dr. Mastik's institution and has seen that a fair share of the town's business headed that way.

"About a year ago Alicia thought she was feeling a bit under the weather, so she went to see this Dr. Mastik. The first thing I knew, about four months ago, she took a room at the hospital, and she has been there ever since. For a while I visited her regularly but whenever I saw her she seemed to be under the influence of some drug. Recently they have said she is too sick to see me."

"A man has a right to see his wife at any hospital."

Gregory looked for a moment at the knot in Ames' tie, then answered, "Yes. A week ago I demanded the right to visit her. Dr. Mastik himself took me to her room. She was in a deep coma. There was no recognition. Dr. Mastik was very angry. He accused me of deliberately lessening her chances of recovery by my insistence on visiting her."



"Why don't you call in another doctor?"

"I've tried that. No other doctor will interfere unless called in by Dr. Mastik. She signed an agreement with him that he should handle her case without interference."

"You didn't sign any such agreement. Man, you don't know your rights. Have you been to the police?"

Gregory just snorted.

"What do you want me to do?" Ames asked him.

"I want you to find out what this is all about and I want you to do it without anyone becoming aware that you are working for me."

For a moment Ames did not reply. Then he said, "Both may be tough. It will cost you twenty-five dollars a day for my personal services—and expenses including the cost of any other operatives I have to employ. The twenty-five per to be in advance."

"How long do you think it will take?" asked the older man, producing a fat billfold from an inner pocket.

Ames did some rapid calculation involving the salary of his beauteous secretary, Honey, and rent. "About ten days," he said casually.

As Gregory started counting out bills he inquired, "When will you report at Union City?"

Ames groaned. "I thought you lived *here.*" He brightened momentarily and added, "My out-of-town fee is double. Fifty dollars a day and expenses with a ten-day guarantee."

Watson Gregory puckered his sharp features into an angry frown. But he counted out two hundred and fifty dollars additional into the pile, gazed for a moment at the top button of Sid's vest, then rose, saying, "Report to me as soon as you've uncovered anything." He did not offer to shake hands in parting.

Ames stood gazing thoughtfully at the closed door. Then placing his old and somewhat battered gray felt hat on the back of his head he prepared to leave. He gathered up the sheaf of currency lying on the blotter pad.

As he passed through the outer office he dropped all but one hundred dollars of the money on the desk of the girl called Honey.

"Be good," he said and went out.

THE sun, a red ball of fire, was getting low when Sid pulled in before the Yellow Moon, a modern, attractive roadhouse and night club on the outskirts of Hilton. The sixty-mile drive had proved hot and depressing and he felt that a break in the journey was indicated.

He entered a large, modestly decorated and heavily carpeted hall to the right of which lay the cocktail lounge and bar. A pretty girl at the check-room window took his hat and he entered the cocktail lounge. Full length sky-blue curtains were drawn completely across one end of this room separating it from the dining room and dance floor beyond. Behind the closed curtains waiters could be heard laying the tables for dinner.

A lone attendant was serving the few customers present. Ames crawled up on a cushioned stool before the bar and ordered a rye and soda.

"How far away is Union City?" he asked the barman.

"About twenty miles southeast of here, sir."

"What sort of a place is it?"

In what was meant to be a confidential whisper the barman replied, "Brother, it stinks."

Sid paid his check and was about to slip off the bar stool when a sudden, stealthy movement, reflected in the huge mirror framing the back wall of the bar, caught his eye.

He raised his eyes to the mirror and found himself looking directly into the reflected face of a woman in her early thirties. Her eyes, set in an oval of smooth creamy loveliness, were large and dark and there was alarm in them. She was sitting at a table in the back of the room. Across from her was a dark, swarthy, saturnine man of about forty-five. He wore a close-cropped black mustache. He had not noticed the meeting of the woman's eyes with Sid's. He was talking earnestly. It was he who had made the movement which had caught Ames' attention.

Sid gathered up his change, tossed a coin to the barman and slid off the stool. Without ostentation he glanced directly at the woman. But now her eyes were demurely lowered and she was slowly sipping her drink.

He wondered what it was she planned to do with the gun, now hidden away in her handbag, which the dark man had handed to her.

SOMEWHERE back in the Victorian Age of plush opulence Union City's leading citizen had constructed what was now the Watkins House. It was a huge, square, high-turreted and gabled three-storied frame house placed well back in a large tract of lawn. A series of broad steps placed in the exact center of the front façade led up to the porch. A huge stone lion sitting on its haunches was mounted on each side of the steps.

Ames parked his car at the curb and took his bag from the rear compartment. No bellboy materialized to carry it for him so he started with it up the walk. He had only progressed about ten feet when he dropped his bag and his mouth flew open in a startled ejaculation. On each side of the walk and resting on wooden sawhorses was a row of burial caskets. Some were open, others shut.

Hastily retrieving his suitcase, Ames traversed the remaining distance to the front of the building, took the steps in two flying leaps and was through the open doorway in slightly better than record time. He signed the old-fashioned register and asked Mr. I. M. Stubbs, as the sign on the counter proclaimed the clerk to be, for a room with bath.

Mr. Stubbs blotted the signature, whirled the book around to a position facing him, smiled merrily and asked, "You one of the boys, Mr. Ames?"

Sid looked blank.

Mr. Stubbs continued to smile gaily. "The Watkins County Embalming and Undertaking Association is holding its annual meeting at our hotel. Started this morning. I'm sorry, Mr. Ames, all the rooms are taken by the boys in the convention."

"Then I'll join the convention," Sid fumed. "I'll take up undertaking, and I'll start on you."

Mr. Stubbs thought that this was too cute for words. After some haggling he admitted he was holding out one room for a conventioneer who had not yet arrived. He smilingly but reluctantly assigned it to Ames.

After a meager dinner in the hotel's dining room Sid got into his car and after a bit of driving found Dr. Mastik's hospital. It was hidden away on the outskirts of the town and to the east of the business center.

He drove past twice before he parked in the shadow of a tree across the street from the modern, two-story brick building with long, low one-story wings on either side. Lights shone from a few windows in the central section, but the wings were in complete darkness. A neat sign on uprights in the lawn's center spelled out the words PRIVATE HOSPITAL, and directly beneath this JOHN MASTIK, M.D.

Having familiarized himself with the general layout of the buildings and grounds, Sid quietly left his car. The front door was a rectangle of light and the door itself stood open behind a closed screen door. He continued his cautious approach until he could look directly into the reception hall. Apparently no one was in attendance.

HE entered and waited, thinking that perhaps the opening of the door had flashed some signal. Nothing happened. No one came.

He moved to the desk. Lying on its top was a small register in which a receptionist obviously entered the names of patients admitted. Running his eye down the list he saw that on the first floor six had been assigned to the North Wing. Only one patient was assigned to the South Wing—Mrs. Watson Gregory, in Room Nine.

He moved quietly to the swinging door leading to what he knew must be the South Wing and entered an unlighted corridor. As he moved slowly along he could distinguish on either side of him door frames in which the doors were closed. But the door of Room Nine was ajar. The faint light filtering through the windows of the room revealed the number on the door panel. He hesitated.

"Who is there?" the surprisingly strong voice of a woman asked from within the room.

Ames held his breath and stood perfectly still. The voice spoke again. There was neither fright nor alarm in its tone. "Whoever you are, you are silhouetted in the doorway. I have been watching you for several minutes."

He expelled his breath. "I'm sorry, Mrs. Gregory," he said softly. "I didn't mean to startle you." Then he added, "You are Mrs. Gregory, aren't you?"

"Yes, of course I'm Mrs. Gregory. And you are the policeman I overheard them talking about. It's high time you got here, too. Come in, come in. Do you want to have the entire staff down on our heads? No one is supposed to be in this wing except me—and those whom they assign to see that I stay here."

Sid moved quickly into the room. As he gently eased the door shut he was facing the corridor. Across the hall and in the entrance to the room directly opposite Number Nine there appeared a faint and narrow line of light running from top to bottom of the door frame as if the door were not entirely closed. The little fine hairs on the back of Sid's neck suddenly stood erect. He was certain no such line of light had been there a few seconds earlier.

He groped his way carefully to the bedside. An overturned chair now would raise the very devil. Bending low over the bed he saw that the occupant's face was haggard and gaunt. Her hair was whiter than the pillow. Mrs. Gregory's voice was the one robust thing left her.

"You are the detective?" she asked.

"Yes. How did you know there was to be a detective?"

"I heard them talking about it."

"They?"

"Dr. Mastik and his head nurse, Ketti Wagner. And their precious Fern Vaughn. Oh, they think I'm in a stupor most of the time, and they get careless. But I've learned tricks that keep me from swallowing all the drugs they give me. I overheard them say that one of them followed Watson to your office. They are probably holding a council of war now. That accounts for your being able to walk right in here."

Sid eased himself quietly to a sitting position on the side of the bed. There was no answering movement from the recumbent figure. Finally she said, "Get me out of here, young man." In her voice was pathetic appeal.

Sid answered quickly. "Perhaps if you tell me what this is all about I'll be able to get you out of here and take care of those responsible for your being here."

"I'd give a lot to see this passel of rogues put where they belong," she said.

"Tell me about it, Mrs. Gregory."

"It all started four years ago when I inherited a great deal of money. Getting on in years, I wanted to put this money to some useful, humane purpose. Others had different ideas. But I insisted on having my way. I know what I want and I usually get it. Especially when I pay the bills. One of the projects which I wanted to sponsor was a hospital for the aged of our community. This building we are in was built with my funds and for that purpose. Then influences and pressures were brought to bear on me to place the project in the hands of a Dr. Mastik from New York. I was assured that he was an eminent specialist."

"By whom?" Sid interrupted.

"Why, by—by many people, it seemed. At least I was persuaded to deed over the property to him."

"But how do you account for your being here as well as your turning this property over to someone else?"

"I'm damned if I know the answer to that one myself, Mr. Detective."

"What are we waiting for?" he asked. "I've got my car outside. I'll take you home and to your husband."

Whatever she was about to answer was never spoken. With a screeching of tires from too suddenly applied brakes a car swung into the hospital drive. The beam of its headlights flashed across the face of the building as it made its turn and for a startled moment Room Nine of the South Wing was filled with light.

In that second Sid Ames had etched on his brain an indelible picture of a pair of eyes filled with terror.

"Please go," Alicia Gregory cried. "If they find you here it will be bad—bad for us both. Go by the window. There is a screen on it but it hinges outward. I'll fasten it again after you have left."

"Can you manage?"

"Yes—only hurry."

As Sid stepped over the sill he whispered, "Keep your chin up, Mrs. Gregory. I'll be back in the morning and I'll have you out of here by noon." Then he was dodging his way into the shadows across the edge of the lawn. As he started his car rolling as quietly as possible toward town, he could see the South Wing aglow with light. Someone at Dr. Mastik's quiet nursing home was making a thorough search.

IT was shortly after ten-thirty when Sid entered the Watkins House. Clerk I. M. Stubbs was still on duty.

"Just the man I want to see," he caroled as Sid requested his key. "A great stroke of luck for you, brother," he went on confidentially. "Man checked out of number twenty-seven—one of our best rooms. The rate will be four dollars. I had you moved down."

Sid thanked the man and took the key to twenty-seven He found that his bag had been unpacked and his belongings put carefully away.

A very thoughtful management, Sid reflected. He would have thought even more highly of it, however, except for two things: He distinctly remembered having locked his bag before leaving the room above and the key still remained on the ring in his pocket; and the .38 Police Positive that had been tucked carefully in the side compartment of the bag was no longer there.

Whistling softly, Ames walked over to the door and pushed a button set in the wall under a little sign which read: ONE RING ROOM SERVICE; TWO RINGS BELLBOY; THREE RINGS ICE WATER. He pushed the button three times. He wanted the bellboy but he figured he might as well have ice water with him. It was a hot night.

"You the hop that moved me down?" Sid asked amiably of the boy who knocked.

After a moment's hesitation the boy answered: "Yes, sir."

"Well, here's a tip for your trouble—and for the ice water." Sid tossed a half dollar. "Who put you up to it?"

"I don't know what you mean," the boy said. His eyes looked frightened. "I just moved your bag like Stubbs told me. I never took the things out of it. I left it right on the foot of the bed."

"Then how does it happen you know the things *were* taken out of my suitcase, if you just left it here?"

"Honest to God, mister, I had nothing to do with it," the boy pleaded. "I was just going downstairs when a man came along. He asked me if this was Mr. Ames' room and when I said it was he made me unlock the door. Then he pried your bag open and made me put the things away as he took them out. He may have lifted something but I never took nothing."

"Who was the man?" Sid held the lad by the lapels of his coat.

What little spunk the boy had was ebbing fast. He almost screamed, "Don't hit me. I'll tell you—it was—Chief Wall."

Sid let go his hold. "And who the hell is Chief Wall?"

"He's the Chief of Police here in Union City."

Sid was so surprised that he made no effort to stop the boy in his headlong flight through the door. He picked up his coat, put it on, turned out the light and left the room. He didn't bother to lock the door.

His first stop was a drugstore. He shut himself in a telephone booth, and ten seconds later the voice of the girl called Honey came over the wire.

"Hello, Sid." There was a caress in the low tones.

"Listen carefully, Honey. I'm in room twenty-seven at the Watkins House in Union City. I'm under my own name. I'm working for a man named Watson Gregory, but nobody is to know that. Somebody wants me out of here. I don't know who or why yet. Tonight they went through my things and lifted my heater. Get hold of Ike and Mike and send them over in the morning. Tell them to keep out of sight and not tie up with me until I contact them. And send me a gun."

"That all, Sid?"

"Yeah, hon. How you feeling?"

There was a pause before the girl replied. "Oh, all right." Then she added, "Sid?"

"Yes, sweetheart."

"Could I come over with Ike and Mike?"

"Papa has work to do, baby. You keep the office going. I need you there when I want you."

"All right, Sid." There was disappointment in her tone. "Please be careful," she said and hung up.

IT was eleven-thirty by the clock over the door. Sid got the residential address of Mr. Watson Gregory from the phone book, and in ten minutes he was parked in front of the house at 916 Bedford Street. Lights were on in a corner room of the first floor. A shaded window faced the lawn. Sid moved cautiously up to it.

Mr. Watson Gregory sat very small and still in a chair at one side of the room. Standing and facing him was a swarthy, saturnine man of medium height and compact build, who was obviously giving him a tongue lashing. It was the man Sid had seen earlier in the evening with the woman at the Yellow Moon.

Sid inched forward in an attempt to hear. His foot caught in a piece of shrubbery and caused a sudden snapping sound. Instantly and without warning a heavy piece of fabric was thrown over his head and a throttling arm coiled quickly around his neck. He was dragged across the lawn for what must have been several hundred yards. He could see nothing, but he knew his captors must number at least two. When they dropped him to the ground, one of them kicked him.

"Cripes, my coat," a voice said and the garment was snatched from around Sid's head.

Fighting mad, he struggled to his feet. He only had time to see in the darkness of the little grove where they had brought him that his two adversaries were large men, powerful and hard looking. After that things happened too fast for him to notice detail.

While they beat him up the two men carried on a seemingly casual conversation. He remembered afterwards that their names were Mac and Alex, but he did not know when they left him on the ground.

When he became wholly conscious, only grim determination and a blind sickening rage enabled him to move one foot before another on his way to the place where he had parked his car. It had disappeared. Setting his teeth, he plodded wearily toward the Watkins House.

The cool air and the exercise of his sore and painful limbs did much to revive him and by the time he reached the hotel he felt improved in mind if not in body. He made his way up the sidewalk with scarcely any conscious thought of the grisly ornaments on either side.

The door to his room remained unlocked as he had left it. Even before he reached for the light switch he knew that there was someone in the room. The faint aroma of a delicate perfume told him it was a woman. He clicked on the light.

Sometime earlier that evening he had speculated idly on what the woman at the Yellow Moon was going to do with the gun he had seen her male companion hand her. Now he knew. She was sitting facing the door and the gun was pointing directly at him.

"Come in," she said. "I've waited a long time to see you. I want to talk with you." She seemed neither surprised at, nor even aware of, his disheveled appearance.

SID closed the door and leaned back against it. Then he gazed in frank admiration at his visitor.

Her eyes, set below finely arched brows, were large and limpidly dark in the smooth white oval of her face. Her black hair, done in two soft swirl rolls in front, a shining smooth chignon in back, gave her a sleek and dramatic appearance. Even though she was seated he could discern that she was tall and beautifully proportioned. Her silk summer-print dress clung to her in the right places and one knee flung carelessly over the other exposed long, well-formed and silken-clad legs.

Ignoring her words as well as the gun, he tossed his battered hat on the bed, followed it with his coat, and strode over to the washbasin against the wall. He turned on the cold water and shucked out of his shirt and undershirt. The woman appeared not in the least nonplused.

At first the water stung in the open cuts of his face, but gradually the smarting gave way to a coolness that soothed and healed. He doused his shoulders and torso. Without drying he slipped back into his shirt, fastened a few buttons and left the tails hanging out over his trousers.

"What can I do for you, sister?" he asked.

"I'm here to save you a lot of trouble." The timbre of her soft voice bespoke refinement.

"I've *had* a lot of trouble." He eased his tired and sore body down onto the bed, propped a pillow behind his head, stared appreciatively for a second at her lovely legs, then shifted his gaze to the gun.

"Just to keep the record straight," he said sleepily, "that rod you're holding doesn't scare me worth a damn. After what has happened to me tonight I could stop a .32 slug with my teeth and never feel it."

The gun did not waver. "I can use it," she said evenly, "and will if it becomes necessary. I know precisely who you are, where you come from and why you are here. Things have been happening to you. Other things will happen to you unless you are prepared to be reasonable."

"What's your idea of my being reasonable?"

"Get out." There was a deep emotional intensity in her voice.

"Who wants me out?"

"I do."

"It might help some if I knew who you are, beautiful." There was no flippancy in Sid's tone.

"Fern Vaughn." The manner in which she said it implied plainly that now he must know who she was.

Where had he heard the name before? Then he remembered. "Their *precious* Fern Vaughn," Mrs. Gregory had said.

The girl turned so that she faced him more directly. The gun lay in her lap but within easy reach.

"Why do *you* want me out of here?" he inquired.

"Is that important?" Her voice had a trace of petulance in it. "You have been engaged to do a certain piece of work here. I will engage you at a considerably higher fee to do some work for me—elsewhere."

"Private detectives don't rate very high in ethics in your book, do they, Miss Vaughn?" He didn't know exactly why he had addressed her as "Miss." In her smile she managed to convey that he had spoken correctly.

"Maybe you're right at that," he said cynically, arising from the bed. "You might even have my number correctly, beautiful. And you *are* beautiful, Miss Vaughn. My kind of beautiful. I'd stick around here just for that reason alone. But I've got another reason, too. Tonight somebody else dealt himself a hand in this game and threw me the joker. I mean to stick in the game until I get the deal. Then I'm declaring jokers are wild."

"You don't know what you are getting into, Sid Ames," she declared passionately. "Get out of it before it is too late. I'm honestly trying to help you."

"Why do you want to help *me*, beautiful?" He sat on the bed facing her now.

She looked levelly at him for a moment and her resplendent dark eyes held a strong appeal.

"I don't quite know," she said simply. "Perhaps it's because I like you. I knew I was going to when our eyes met in the mirror in that cocktail room."

He yawned and arose wearily from the bed. "Tomorrow we talk it all over, Fern. Tonight I'm too sleepy to argue with you. You came here to have your say. You've had it. The answer is no. Now I'm tired and I'm going to bed."

SID was finishing his breakfast in the hotel's restaurant the following morning when his eye was caught and held by a small item in the local paper.

"Damn them. Oh, damn them," he said aloud.

A few sticks of type, hidden on the third page, heralded the passing of Mrs. Watson Gregory early that morning. She was survived, the notice said, by her husband and a niece, Miss Fern Vaughn.

He had no sooner returned to his room than the phone bell rang. It was Fern Vaughn.

"Have you heard?" she asked breathlessly.

"About Mrs. Gregory? Yes."

"They called Uncle Watson on the phone this morning."

"They? Who?"

"The hospital. Dr. Mastik, I suppose. I was asleep at the time and he didn't call me. He says it was about five or a little after. He's terribly upset."

Sid made some rapid mental calculations. It was, he figured, about twenty after ten when he had seen the hospital suddenly blaze with lights.

"They told him a night nurse had been making a routine check of patients and had found Aunt Alicia dead in her room. It was not unexpected, they said. Her heart had been very bad for months."

The girl was either a consummate actress or the grief in her voice was real. "I'm sorry, beautiful," he said, "about Mrs. Gregory, I mean. And that I got here too late to help her. Tell me what your uncle says about me, now."

"That's why I called. He asked me to tell you he was too upset to see you. That naturally your—er—your business deal was at an end. That it had all been a terrible mistake anyway. He says you may keep one day's salary and expenses and return the balance to him."

Sid almost laughed in spite of himself. "Tell uncle there is no sale on both counts," he replied, a suspicion dawning in his mind. "And Fern, he's sitting right there beside you telling you what to say. So tell him there was a job guaranteed and paid for in advance. I never cheat a client. Tell him I'm coming out in the open as his representative. I mean to find out why Mrs. Gregory was at the hospital at all; how her death happened to coincide so perfectly with the start of this investigation; why the obituary was placed so inconspicuously in the paper; why the short period before burial. Tell Mr. Gregory to notify the hospital I'll call. That I'll work as quietly as possible if he does this. And if he doesn't I'll pull the town right down around his ears. I'm just the guy to do it, too."

Perhaps three minutes passed before she spoke.

"Mr. Gregory says he has reconsidered. He will notify Dr. Mastik at once." There was the tiniest of pauses and then she added in a low hurried whisper, "Oh, Sid, why wouldn't you do as I asked and get out?"

"And leave you all alone, beautiful?"

She hurriedly disconnected.

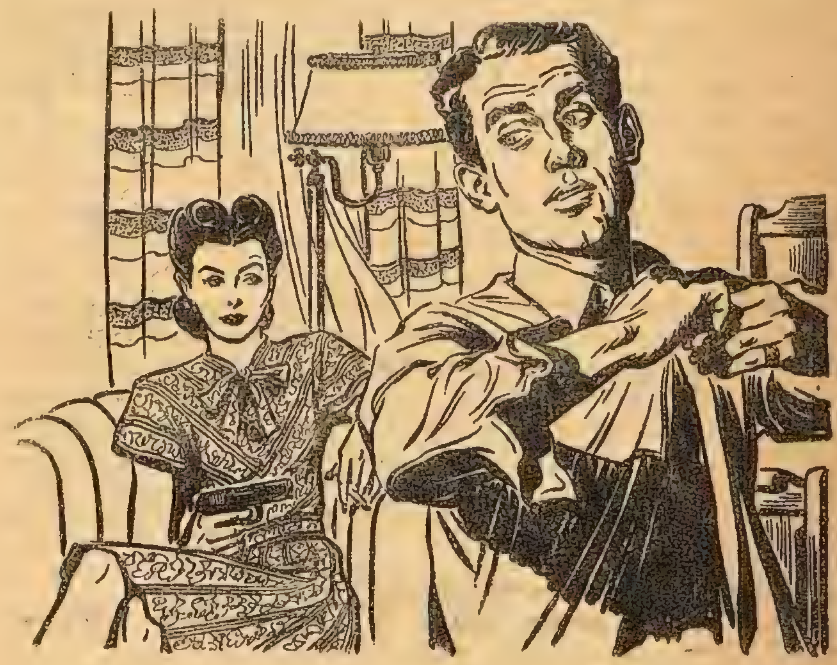
Sid put up the receiver and went downstairs and out onto the broad veranda. Two skinny, sad-visaged figures sat there in rocking chairs. Neither paid the slightest attention to him although he halted a few feet from them. Each wore the badge of the undertakers' association.

Taking a cigarette from his pocket, tapping it on his thumb but not lighting it, Sid strolled over toward the little men. From the shabby brown suits, round-toed shoes and dilapidated felt hats to their wizened ageless faces they were as alike as two peas in a pod.

Dropping into a convenient chair between them and bending slightly toward the nearer of the two he placed the cigarette between his lips and quietly asked, "Got a match, brother?"

The little man did not change his expression, but he started searching slowly through his pockets. Sid continued, "Somebody hijacked my car. I'll need yours. Where is it and where are the keys?"

The small man kept up his fruitless search. His lips barely moved as he spoke. "The maroon Chevvy coop parked in front of the joint. Keys in dash compartment."



"Did you bring me a rod?"

"Same place."

"Good boy. Anything else?"

"That frail at the office said to take care of yourself." The man permitted himself a small leer.

"Forget it. Nose around and see if you can locate my car. I think the cops nabbed it. Also find out where I can locate a banker named Jovene. Don't show your hand. Hole up in my room—here's the key, twenty-seven, second floor—and wait for me."

The man at last found his matches and produced a light for Sid. Then he sauntered away. At no time had the second man indicated that he was aware of this conversation.

Sid said in a low voice, "Find out who runs the morning paper—*The Blade* I think it's called—and if you can, whether anything screwy went on there early this morning. Keep under cover. Mike has the key to my room. See you later."

"Okay. Who chewed you up that way?"

"A couple of the town's tough coppers."

"Want we should do something about it?"

"Skip it, and do what I say."

The little man rocked serenely on for another minute or two. Then he arose and disappeared into the hotel.

Sid had no difficulty in locating his assistant's car. In the compartment of the dash he found, as promised, a revolver which he slipped into the holster under his left arm. He drove directly to Dr. Mastik's hospital.

Seated at the desk in the reception hall was a woman of about forty dressed in the white starched uniform and cap of a trained nurse. As Sid approached her she arose with a questioning frown. She was almost as tall as his own six feet. Her black hair was carefully tucked under the stiff edges of the cap. Her face, thin and long, without make-up, was stern and unamiable. She was thin to the point of emaciation and endowed with all the sex appeal of a pipe cleaner. Only her black eyes seemed alive and they glowed with the light of fanaticism.

"My name is Ames," Sid said. "I'd like to see Dr. Mastik."

"May I ask about what?"

"Yes. About Mrs. Gregory. I represent Mr. Watson Gregory."

"Ah, yes. We've been advised. But Dr. Mastik is at present occupied. I am his assistant, Dr. Ketti Wagner. Won't you sit down? What is it that you wish to know?"

Sid hesitated, then spoke. "I want to know why Mrs. Gregory was confined here. What she was being treated for. The cause of her death."

Ketti Wagner turned to a near-by file cabinet and took out a folder. She said, glancing at the papers within, "Mrs. Gregory came to Dr. Mastik for the first time a year ago this month and upon the recommendation of an old friend of hers, Mr. Jovene, also a patient of ours. She had a rather alarming cardiac arrythmia, and we had little hope of achieving any permanent cure. She passed through the advanced stages of dropsy and last night—or rather early this morning—passed away."

"You wouldn't mind some other physician checking that record?"

The straight line of her mouth set again. "Certainly not—if there were some legitimate reason for his doing so."

"And it would all stand up under post mortem?"

For the first time anger and outright hostility showed in the woman's expression.

"What an absurd question."

Both Ames and Ketti Wagner turned toward the man who had spoken. He had entered quietly through a doorway to the rear. He was the same dark, swarthy man of the black mustache whom Sid had seen twice previously—at the Yellow Moon and at Watson Gregory's home. He was Dr. Mastik.

He smiled, revealing white teeth. "It is understandable, Mr. Ames, that Mr. Gregory is under the stress of his emotions upset. Therefore we the implications of your questions will overlook."

"Could I see Mrs. Gregory's room?" Sid asked.

The two doctors exchanged a swift glance. It was the Wagner woman who answered, "Yes, of course, if you wish. If you would be so kind you might remove Mrs. Gregory's personal things to the home." She pressed a button set in the desk.

The nurse who conducted Sid down the carpeted corridor of the South Wing wore a uniform a good four inches shorter than regulations ordinarily provide; her well-molded legs were encased not in cotton but in silk stockings; and she wore on her small feet not flat but high-heeled shoes.

MRS. GREGORY'S bed was stripped of bedclothing and the room looked empty and bare. On the floor lay a pillow, still in its white slip. Sid picked it up. In its center was a dark stain which could have been blood.

He strode over to where the girl was bending over the bed packing some apparel into a suitcase. He slipped one arm around her small soft waist and pulled her erect.

"You can drop the professional manner, luscious," he said, grinning at her. He pulled her to him. The arched young body just fitted the curve of his chest. A coil of the yellow hair slipped out from under her cap and swung across the back of his hand. The soft red mouth formed a round inviting pucker. Sid kissed her, at first casually as though the act were part of the day's work with him. But this girl didn't stay kissed casually. It was he, not she, who called quits.

"This will have to come under the head of 'unfinished business,' luscious," he said. "We're both on duty."

The blue eyes looked boldly into his now as the girl smoothed her disarranged uniform.

"Say when, handsome," she said. "The name is Wanda Parsons. I'm a little girl who likes the nicer things of life. I could tell you more about me, say over a nice dinner at the Yellow Moon."

"Sure, sure," Sid answered her readily. "But right now tell me something about this layout here." He moved over to the bed, sat down beside the girl and took her hand. "This Dr. Mastik. And Ketti Wagner—she doesn't look all wool and a yard wide to me."

"That goon!" she cried. "Calls herself a doctor! Yes, maybe she was in Latvia or Lithuania or wherever she came from, but over here she's no more than a nurse. She and her fancy airs! Why—"

At the sound of footsteps approaching along the corridor the girl was on her feet and bending over packing the bag. Sid stood up and faced the doorway.

"I'll be off duty at seven," she whispered hurriedly. "You can pick me up at the nurses' home in the rear at eight. We'll go places and do things."

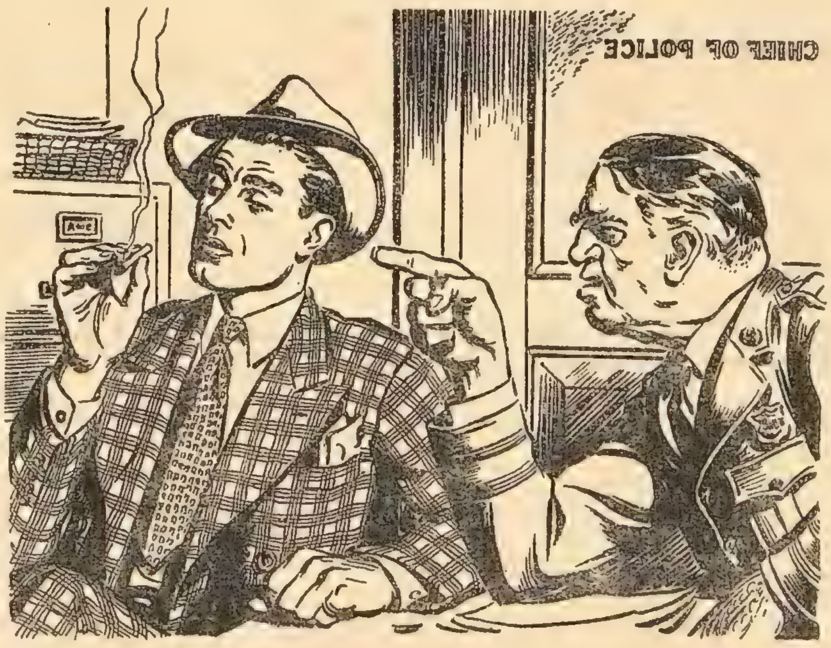
"That's an idea. But I may not be able to make it."

"You'll make it all right," she said and she was not being coy now. "I was in Room Ten across the hall last night. Maybe someone would like to know you were here in this room then. Nobody but me knows it—yet."

Wanda Parsons' soft blue eyes were demurely lowered to the level of her own neat white shoe tops when the approaching footsteps turned into Room Nine and stopped.

The man who stood in the doorway was of average height and build, and nearing fifty. He was dressed in a well-tailored black business suit with which he wore a wing collar and black tie. He looked not unlike a sad mare which had recently lost its colt.

"Ah, Mr. Ames," the stranger spoke in a tone of voice as heavy as anesthesia, "Miss Wagner said I might find you here. Permit me to introduce myself. I am Melvin Lamb—ah—mortician. I've come about the unfortunate demise of—ah—one of our leading citizens, Mrs. Gregory. My night assistant was of course called and took charge promptly."



The blonde went on quietly packing.

"Who called your night assistant?" Sid asked.

"Why—ah—the hospital, of course. Customary in such matters, I assure you, Mr. Ames."

"I thought the family usually picked out its own undertaker."

Melvin Lamb winced slightly at Sid's choice of terms. "A mere formality, Mr.—ah—Ames. Here in Union City the best families would inevitably come to Lamb's."

"The hospital wouldn't get a kick-back on the business they throw your way, would they?" Sid asked ironically.

Lamb looked so hurt that Sid would not have been surprised if he had burst into tears. "You are distraught, Mr. Ames. This great tragedy has—ah—unnerved you. I quite understand—and that no offense was intended."

"If I were you," Sid said, "I wouldn't go to too much trouble. You might have to open everything up again."

Lamb's sad eyes turned on him with a doleful expression which almost, but not quite, hid lively interest.

"What do you mean, Mr. Ames?" he asked quietly.

"Well, everyone is in such a hurry about this interment, and if it goes through on schedule without certain questions answered, you may find the Police Commissioner asking the D.A. for an exhumation order."

The interest died down in the undertaker's eyes. "I think not, Mr. Ames," he said. "I am—ah—the police commissioner of Union City. Good day, sir."

With which parting intelligence Mr. Melvin Lamb left Sid to his thoughts.

BACK at the hotel Sid found his aides, Ike and Mike, comfortably ensconced in his room. Each took a battered notebook from the inner recesses of his shapeless and worn brown coat and looked at Sid. He gave the nod to Mike. Mike grinned and launched into his story.

"A tough copper name of Jim Wall is chief of police, but it's un'erstood a local body snatcher name of Melvin Lamb is behind Wall. Pulls the strings, un'erstand? An' this Wall has a couple of strong-arm gorillas named McQuinn and Alexander, plainclothes dicks that do all of Wall's personal dirty work. And boss, your car is in a big lot behind the clink. There's a tag on the steering wheel and no keys in the ignition."

Sid nodded at Ike. He, too, consulted his notebook.

"The guy who runs the newspaper is name of Leininger. Last night about two-thirty this here Leininger routed his typesetter out of bed and the two of them go back to the print shop. Seems an important item has got to catch the paper before it's run—an item about an old dame turning in her chips at some local sick house. The typesetter thinks they'll sure run it on page one, but the old man says no, and they break up the form for page three and drop in the slug."

Sid took a turn up and down the room. Finally he turned to Mike once more. "What about the banker?"

"Mr. Struve Jovene is president of the Union City National."

"You boys did all right," Sid said. "I'll get my own car. You take the Chevvy and take a stake-out on a house at 916 Bedford Street. There's a man named Gregory lives there. He's sixty-five, thin and wiry. Got gray hair. Keep an eye out for him and if he goes anywhere tail him. Also watch out for Gregory's niece—a tall good-looking brunette about thirty. Don't let her get away from you. Keep an eye on anyone else who goes in or out, but don't tail them."

CHIEF WALL sat between an old-fashioned roll-top desk and glass-covered table on which was a litter of papers. Bushy black hair, turning gray at the temples, overhung his shaggy eyebrows. Great hams of hands lay placidly on the table. He gazed unwinkingly at Ames.

"I'm going to be in your town for a few days and thought I'd drop in and make your acquaintance," Sid began. "Working on a case here, you know. I'm a private investigator."

"Got anything that says you are?" Wall asked woodenly. Sid handed over his identification papers. They were carefully scrutinized and then slowly returned to him.

"Besides," Sid went on, "I figured I might as well come over and pick up my gun—the .38 you lifted out of my bag over at the Watkins House last night."

A curtain dropped suddenly over the Chief's beady little eyes. "Got a permit for that rod?" he asked.

Sid opened his pocket case again and shoved a paper at him. Chief Wall examined it carefully. Then he pivoted to the rolltop and brought out a .38 Police Positive. He broke the cylinder of the gun and compared its serial number with that on the permit. Seemingly satisfied, he handed both the paper and gun to Ames.

"Got another card for the one you're carrying under your arm?" he asked without emphasis.

Ames restrained an impulse to anger, opened the card case once again and brought forth still another permit. The same routine was repeated.

"While I'm here collecting my property I might as well take the keys to my car," Sid said. "The Plymouth coupé with the out-of-town license that's parked out back."

"Oh, that *your* car? A couple of my men brought it in early this morning." The Chief put one of his huge paws into his trousers' pocket and brought out a key ring. He tossed it to Sid who deftly caught it, checked the keys and dropped them into his coat pocket.

"Who you working for?"

"Watson Gregory." Sid couldn't tell whether this was news to the Chief or not. "He came to me because he was worried about his wife. She had been in a sanitarium here for a long time and he wasn't sure she should be. He even had an idea she might be kept there without her consent. She died last night."

"Well, that lets you out of a job, don't it?"

"No. I'm still looking into it. Here's a chance for the police department of Union City to get in on the right side. I don't want any credit. I just want to clean up this mess and go home. Want to play ball?"

Chief Wall leaned forward and his heavy eyebrows all but covered the hard eyes. "Get out of town quick or my men will really muss you up. And if they miss I'll take it on myself. Out!"

Sid stood up and grinned down at him. "I'll be seeing you." He left the room, closing the door carefully.

FIFTEEN minutes later he was introducing himself to Mr. Struve Jovene at the bank and sitting down with him. Jovene's short fat fingers threw a small switch in a box on the desk. He then sat back and listened to Sid's explanation of his presence in Union City.

The banker's blue eyes had ceased to twinkle when Sid finished. "You realize the gravity of what you have implied," he asked seriously, "and the consequences, if you are unable to sustain your charges?"

"Sure," answered Sid bitterly. "I've had it told to me enough times today."

For a moment Jovene drummed his round soft fingers on the expensive leather pad before him. Then as if making up his mind about something he said, "I have known Watson Gregory for a great many years, Mr. Ames. My feelings toward him have never been other than the friendliest, but it is my opinion that he has always resented his wife's much larger fortune and her shrewd management of it."

"How much of a fortune did Mrs. Gregory have?"

"I would call you a liar, Mr. Ames, if you ever said I told you this, but as it will now soon become a matter of public record—" he finished that sentence with a shrug. "Between one and a half and two million dollars."

A low whistle emitted from Sid's lips. "That is a lot of moola. Who will it go to now?"

"On that I cannot enlighten you; nor would I if I could," the banker answered with friendly dignity.

"Know an undertaker in town named Lamb?"

"Of course. He is one of our leading citizens."

"What can you tell me about him?"

The banker hesitated, then moved his chair close to Sid's and in a low voice replied, "Melvin Lamb is to our town what you might call 'the big-shot.' He owns many of our leading businesses and is a large stockholder in others."

"He could put the screws on a lot of people if he took the notion, couldn't he?"

"I did not say so, Mr. Ames."

"Including you," Sid finished.

Jovene moved back to his original position. "I did not say so," he repeated.

"You tell me you knew Mrs. Gregory intimately. In all the time she was ill, was there any one incident which in your opinion justified a suspicion that everything was not on the level?"

Without hesitation the banker answered, "Positively not. I am convinced you are barking up the wrong tree."

"I came here to do a job," Sid pursued. "Now everybody I speak to warns me one way or another that if I want to stay healthy I'd better forget the job and go back where I came from."

"Would you care to name names?" Jovene asked.

"I would," Sid answered. "Watson Gregory, Chief Wall, Dr. Mastik and his assistant, Ketti Wagner." He started to mention Fern Vaughn, then decided against it. "Even a little blonde babe out at Mastik's hospital threatened that I'd better play ball or else." Sid grinned.

Struve Jovene leaned forward. "You say this girl threatened you?"

"Yeah, in her own sweet way."

"But then you should go to the police and report the matter."

"Forget it. I've got plans to take care of her later." Sid grinned again.

"I still advise that you let the police handle it."

"From what I've seen of your police force," said Sid, picking up his hat, "I wouldn't call them in on a piggy-bank robbery. The silver might be missing when they left."

He went back to the hotel and had just finished changing his clothes when someone knocked. At his "Come in," Fern Vaughn entered the room.

"Hello, beautiful," he said. "I didn't expect you."

He led her to a comfortable chair and stood before her. She was obviously suffering from some great inner agitation. He placed a hand gently on her shoulder. "Tell me, Fern, what has disturbed you so."

"Nothing concrete, but at the funeral this afternoon Dr. Mastik's solicitude over Uncle Watson's grief seemed overdone. The two men have disliked each other for months. And Mr. Jovene seemed uneasy, apprehensive. And he seemed to be looking to Mr. Lamb for directions."

Sid drew up a chair and sat down facing her.

"Look, beautiful," he said. "I don't believe your aunt died a natural death. To put it brutally—I think she was murdered. I can only help her in one way now. That is by finding out why she died. And I mean to—with your help if you'll give it to me, but without it if not."

Her black eyes looked intently into his brown ones. Then she leaned forward, closed her eyes and whispered, "Hold me tight for just a minute, Sid."

Their lips met once, briefly—then again in a longer kiss. Finally she pushed him from her and with a little sigh settled back into her chair. Then she said simply, "I'm ready to help you, Sid. I'll start at the beginning and tell you everything I know.

"My mother was Aunt Alicia Gregory's sister. When grandmother died most of her money was left to Mrs. Gregory who had always shown great business ability. My own mother was left funds adequate for herself and me, but when she passed on I found that most of these had been spent on my education and social training and that very little was left me on which to live. Naturally I looked for work. This was two years ago and in the west where we had always lived.

"About four months ago I received a letter from Uncle Watson inviting me to come and live with him and Aunt Alicia here. I was pretty unhappy in my job and I came. I found that Aunt Alicia was gravely ill—not living at home at all—and that she did not know I had been invited to come to Union City. Then one day Uncle surprised me by telling me I could help undo what was a very wicked wrong."

AMES lit a cigarette and gave it to her. She thanked him with a smile and went on, "Uncle Watson said that somehow Dr. Mastik had got Aunt Alicia under his influence, had persuaded her to deed her property over to him and now had forced her to sign a new will. That the old will which it negated provided for a sizable legacy for me in addition to making him the principal beneficiary. He had received through the mail one copy of the new will disinheriting us both and an anonymous note saying that there was but *one other copy*, which was in Dr. Mastik's possession. If I would help him secure and destroy that one copy, Uncle explained, then in case anything did happen to Aunt Alicia her original and true instructions would be carried out. I know it was reprehensible, Sid, but I agreed to help."

"How did he suggest you might turn the trick?"

"He said I could easily ingratiate myself into the doctor's good graces, then seek opportunity to steal the will. But I went to Mastik and told him frankly that I knew about the will and that as one of the two direct blood heirs I would have a good chance to break it. I asked him what he proposed to do about it. He was oily and hypocritical.

"A few days later Ketti Wagner called me and the three of us met. Why not let the present arrangement remain in status quo, was her proposal. Then *they* would take care of me later more generously than I was provided for in the original will. I pretended to agree. We became fellow conspirators and I spent as much time as possible at the hospital and with Mastik and Wagner. I was constantly trying to find where they had the will hidden and they were using me to keep advised of Uncle Watson's moves and plans."

"So that's how they knew he was going to call me in?" Sid asked.

"Yes," she answered readily.

"Why was I employed at all?"

"To frighten Dr. Mastik. You were to be dismissed, before you could get far in your investigation."

"So that was all moonshine last night? Your waiting here for me with the gun?"

"Not exactly. Dr. Mastik insisted that I see you and buy or scare you off. He gave me the revolver and drove me to the hotel. Then when I talked with you and liked you I didn't want you to get messed up in it. I knew Mastik could be ruthless. He said that if you got in his way he would fix it so the town was unhealthy for you. When you came in all bloody I knew he had begun."

"But Mastik didn't have anything to do with my getting beat up. A couple of Wall's gorillas did it."

She seemed genuinely surprised.

"And what about the will, Fern? Did you ever find it?"

For a moment there was fright in her eyes. "Yes, Sid," she said, "I know where Dr. Mastik's copy of it is now. I saw him hand it to Mr. Jovene at the funeral. It was when they thought I had returned to the car. But I was close enough to recognize it."

THERE was a knock on the door, and the girl known as Honey walked in. In her hand she carried a suitcase.

Honey tried a smile, but it didn't come off. Finally, after a long embarrassing silence she said, "I'm sorry, Sid." She looked as if she might cry.

Ames, who had never in his life wanted less to see anyone, forced a smile. "Glad to see you, kid," he said. "Fern, this is my secretary, Cleo Leighton. She runs my office. She has come over here to bring me some important papers—I hope. I mean, I guess. Everybody calls her Honey." He repeated rather lamely. "She runs my office."

"How nice for you," murmured Fern Vaughn in a detached voice, looking not at Miss Leighton but at Ames. "And what an adorable name. So appropriate."

"And Honey," he continued, "this is Miss Vaughn. You remember my speaking of Mr. and Mrs. Gregory. The case that brought me to Union City. Miss Vaughn is the Gregorys' niece."

Honey looked at Fern Vaughn for a moment, then smiled sweetly at Sid. "At her age?"

"Touché," murmured Fern also smiling. A look of respect came into her eyes. "Shall I wait downstairs, Sid, while you conclude this—er—important business you have with Honey? Then we can resume our discussion."

"Discussion?" echoed Honey. "*Do* wipe the lipstick off your face, Sid. It looks so silly."

Sid snatched his handkerchief frantically from his hip pocket and began to scrub at his lips. "Damn it," he shouted, "the two of you cut it out and sit down!"

The girls said in unison, "Why, cut what out, Sid?"

"You know what I mean," he cried excitedly. "I don't know why you came over here, Honey."

"I came, Sid," she responded seriously, "because I couldn't rid myself of a premonition that you were in danger. It was probably silly."

"I can't hate you for that, kid," he answered roughly but with underlying affection. "Get a room?"

"No. That's why I brought my bag up here to park it until I could make other arrangements."

"Ike and Mike have two rooms. They'll give you one."

"Or she can stay with me," said Fern Vaughn. She sounded as if she meant it, too.

Honey murmured, "Thanks," and she, too, sounded as if she meant it. "Women," thought Sid, "are completely unpredictable—besides being absolutely nuts."

Fern Vaughn rose. "I really must be going. Why don't the two of you have dinner together? Then if Honey will stay with me, drive her out later this evening."

"No, please," protested Honey earnestly. "I can easily have my dinner in the hotel. You two run along and have dinner together just as I'm sure you had planned."

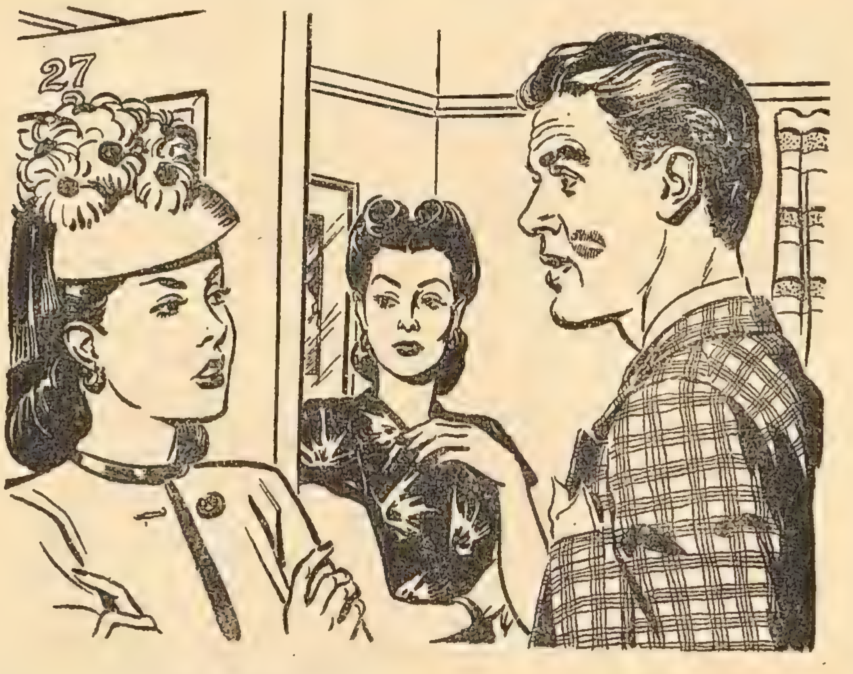
Sid walked over to the bureau and got his hat. He strode over to the door, a grin spreading over his homely face. "I've got a better idea," he said cheerfully. "Now that you two gals have buried the hatchet, *you* have dinner together. It just happens I've got a date."

He started out, then stuck his head back into the room. "With a *blonde*," he concluded, and closing the door, went whistling down the hall.

By a quarter after eight Ames and Wanda Parsons were speeding through the countryside along the smooth pavement. He could feel the warmth of the soft, vibrant body so close to him and smell the perfumed fragrance of the blonde tresses; and she was calling him "Siddy."

"Tell me, Wanda," he asked, careful to keep his voice casual, "how did you happen to join up with Dr. Mastik's place?"

"If you must have it I can give it to you quick. I was raised in a coal town. I graduated from high school four years ago. My old man's a Polack. The name isn't Parsons either, but I liked it better than Pulsudski. I got it out of a movie book. Well, there I was. Age sixteen. And knowing more than any kid sixteen ought to know. I liked fun. Lots of fun. I ran away from home, bought some peroxide and commenced being blonde Wanda Parsons. A fellow I was going with was an intern at City Hospital. He talked me into taking nursing."



"What kind of a guy is your boss—this Mastik?"

"Oh, he's all right, I guess. He gives me sort of a creepy feeling once in a while, though."

"Anything funny happen around the hospital to make you feel that way?"

"You know, it's funny you should ask that, Sid," she answered. "Until a few months ago everything seemed on the up-and-up just like any other hospital."

"Until Mrs. Gregory came to stay there?"

"Yeah, I guess so. Dr. Mastik turned most of his patients over to Ketti Wagner and what time he spent there he devoted to Mrs. Gregory. Only he and Wagner were allowed to go near her."

"What did you *think* was going on?"

"I didn't know. Only one day I was called into Mrs. Gregory's room to witness her sign some papers. I wasn't told what they were, but from the oily way Dr. Mastik was handling the situation and the rush he was in I thought there was something phony about it. Then one day I happened to be in his office on an errand. He had been called to the emergency ward. On his desk was one of those lock-box affairs. It was open. I didn't mean to snoop into it, but right on top was a paper that had written on it: LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF ALICIA BALDWIN GREGORY. There were two copies. I don't know why I did it, but I grabbed one of them and got out of there in a hurry."

"Anybody see you?"

"I don't think so. I wanted to put it back, but I never got a chance. It just said she left everything to the hospital.

"Later I remembered that we'd signed four papers. Two had been on top and two underneath with just the place for the signatures exposed. I thought then maybe Mrs. Gregory didn't know about signing those two copies of a will."

"So you sent your copy of the will to Mr. Gregory. And you told him in a note that there was one other copy. You didn't sign your name."

"How do you know all that?" the girl asked in alarm.

"Never mind, baby," Sid answered; then added, "What about last night?"

"Well, you know part of it. I was off duty but hadn't gone out. Wagner sent for me. Both she and Dr. Mastik were excited in a subdued sort of way. They said that they had been called out on an emergency case and that I was to take charge. They left in the doctor's car. Then I got to thinking about Mrs. Gregory. I decided to go see her and the hell with them. I almost made it when I heard the front screen door open and someone come in. I thought it was Mastik or Wagner so I slipped into Number Ten and hid in the dark."

"Then I came along the hall," Sid said. "I thought there was someone in that room. There was a faint line of light around the door jamb. Probably it came from the windows."

"Yeah, I'd had the door open a crack while you were talking with her."

"What did you do then?"

"I went up the hall as fast as my shoes would take me—and twice as quiet. Then I telephoned Dr. Mastik at the number he'd given me and told him that there was a man in Mrs. Gregory's room. He did a funny thing, then, Sid. He said for me not to alarm the man in any way and not to call the police. It wasn't five minutes later that his car came roaring up."

"What was the number you called to get the doctor?"

"Main 8969. It's Mr. Lamb's residence."

"What happened when they returned to the hospital?"

"They figured out that you had gone out the window. They bullied poor Mrs. Gregory but she wouldn't tell them anything. They tried to pin it on me. Said I had let you in. They were furious. Sid, I'm scared."

Just then they rounded a curve and there a hundred yards in front of them was the roadhouse.

"Siddy!" Wanda shrieked, diverted. "Do you see what I see? And am I glad! Buy baby that champagne, sailor—and quick."

AS they went into the Yellow Moon, they did not notice the car which pulled up behind them and the man and woman who followed them into the night club.

As they were being seated heads turned from all over the already crowded dining room for a better look at Wanda. Her make-up had been carefully applied to bring out the soft contour of her face. A vivid red cupid's bow smiled to show white, even teeth. Dark blue mascaraed eyelashes, long and curved, provided a setting for her large blue eyes. The eyelashes were false, of course, but somehow no one minded that with Wanda.

A heavily sequined, deep-red dinner dress covered her as if it had been poured on while molten and allowed to cool. She tossed a light silver fox jacket over the back of her chair, rubbed her small hands together and cooed, "Come on, handsome, bring on the bubble water."

Ames instructed the captain to ice two bottles of Pol Roger and then led her to the dance floor. In his arms her eyes closed, her lips parted in a sensual smile.

"How I love music and dancing, and wine and good food. How I love fun, Sid," she breathed.

When they were finishing dinner, he asked, "Who was it that came to the hospital in the second car last night, Wanda?"

She drained her glass in one gulp and refilled it herself. "Well, Siddy, if you must know—"

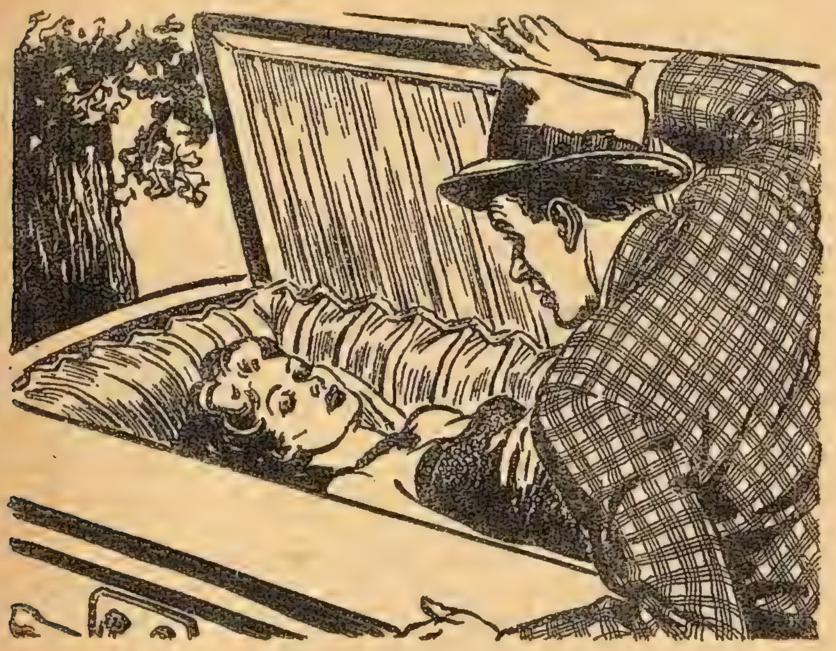
Whatever she was about to say was drowned out in a roll of drums and a melodic blare of the orchestral brasses. The supper show was on. It lasted a full hour, and by then a third champagne bottle was empty and Wanda's smile looked as if it were painted on. "Never hearda horshpi—hoshpi—of Dr. Mashtik," she cooed happily, when Sid tried another question.

Just then he saw a party of four was being escorted to a table across the room. The men were Struve Jovene and Melvin Lamb. And the two tall beautiful brunettes with them were Honey Leighton and Fern Vaughn.

Sid sat for a few moments sipping his drink. Presently he asked Wanda if she wanted to dance. Maybe it would clear her head. But it merely enabled the occupants of Fern Vaughn's table to discover them. He saw the look of incredulity which flitted from face to face.

Once back at the table he excused himself and, taking an elaborate and circuitous route toward the gentlemen's room, managed to pass the table at which the party sat. The two men nodded in recognition but neither girl gave him so much as a glance.

Passing through the cocktail lounge he glanced incuriously into the mirror of the back bar. Once again he saw the reflection of a man and a woman sitting at a table in the back of the room. This time they were Dr. Mastik and his assistant, Ketti Wagner. They were gazing steadily into the dining room beyond, watching Wanda Parsons.



When he came back through the cocktail lounge, Dr. Mastik and his companion were nowhere to be seen. Advancing to the dining and dancing salon, he glanced quickly around. His own table, he saw, was empty, but as he sat down there came, from several tables to his left, a long, drawn-out shriek, "Siddee-e-e! Siddee-e-e! Look what I'm doing. Fortunes! Look!"

Wanda, in a rapture of sheer excitement ran over to him. Her hands were full of crisp green currency.

"I got lonesome when you went off, so I told fortunes. Oh, Siddy, I had more fun. And look at all the money I made, too." She dumped it onto the table.

"Well, put it away, chick, before we both get bounced out of here. Besides, school's out now. We're going home."

On the way out she stopped at a table occupied by an elderly gentleman with a cute young trick. "Oh, I didn't tell *this* gentleman's future," she squealed, leaning over and taking his hand. "I see trouble ahead for you. Soon. When you go home and your wife smells that powder on your coat and sees that lipstick on your collar—"

Sid pushed her, struggling and laughing, to the door.

"Oh, but, Siddy," she cried, suddenly clinging to him and standing on tiptoes to kiss him warmly on the lips, "I had such fun. Thank you for it—you're—you're swell!" Then she ran out into the empty lobby and disappeared toward the ladies' room.

He waited for her in the cocktail lounge a patient five minutes; then an impatient ten. Just as he decided to go in search of her, the lights dimmed and the midnight show was announced. The drums rolled again and the trumpets blared, their echo amplified through the speakers set high in the walls. Loud—but not loud enough to blanket the piercing scream which was followed immediately by the slamming of a door. A scream so full of stark terror and anguish that it froze Sid's blood in his veins and held him rooted to the floor.

It was only a matter of seconds before he regained his wits. He hurried out into the lobby, looking right and left as he went. The big room was empty. Not even was the coat-room girl behind her counter. A half dozen quick strides took him past the entrance to the men's room, which was toward the rear of the lobby and on the right, and to the door of the ladies' room.

"Where is the girl who came in here?" Sid barked at the colored maid who opened it at his rap.

"What did she look like, mister?" the maid asked.

"Blonde. Good-looking. In a red dress."

"Oh, that little lady. Why, she left here—le's see, must be five, ten minutes ago. Somebody calls to her. Says 'Wanda, are you there?' She answers right pert, 'Comin', honey,' and goes on out. That's the last I seen of her."

Returning to the lobby Sid strode over to the door marked "Manager" and threw it violently open. The manager, Mr. Jackson, sat at a desk poring over a ledger.

"I'm Ames," Sid said hurriedly. "Sorry to bust in on you like this. But something screwy has just happened out here and I need your help." Then he outlined quickly and succinctly what had happened.

With Sid present, Jackson questioned the help, getting full and direct answers. The only thing that was added to Sid's previous knowledge was a firm conviction that none of the employees knew anything about the affair. But he and Jackson found the cloak-room attendant unconscious on the floor. On her forehead there was a bruise the size of a hen's egg.

AFTER they had carried the unconscious girl into the manager's office, Jackson had every nook and cranny of the building searched.

The bus boy who had been commandeered to replace the injured coat-room girl was giving out hats and wraps to departing guests when Sid got back to the lobby. As he passed the ladies' room the door opened and Honey emerged.

"Why, Mr. Ames," she cried in mock surprise. "We saw you leave with the beauteous blonde and—"

"Skip it, Honey," he said. "Something has happened. Did Jovene or Lamb or Fern leave your table between the time Wanda and I got up to go out and the moment the lights were extinguished signaling the start of the show?"

"Yes, Sid," she answered slowly. "Mr. Jovene went, he said, to get some cigars before the show went on. Mr. Lamb excused himself too. Then Fern said she'd seen some people across the room she wanted to speak to, and would I mind. I didn't mind because I was watching you, Sid. I don't know why I was—but I just was. None of them came back until after the show started."

When Sid returned to the manager's office the doctor had arrived and had revived the coat-room girl. All she could recollect was a sound—just a slight one—and bang, the ceiling seemed to fall on her.

Two policemen had arrived also and one of them now came into the office. In his palm he held four red sequins from Wanda Parsons' dress.

"Show me where you found them," Sid demanded quickly. The man led them outside the fire-exit door.

"Here's another one!" shouted the other officer as they played their flashlights over the ground.

But it was Sid who discovered evidence that Wanda had been forcibly taken from the building. Underneath some shrubbery he found a sofa pillow from one of the divans in the lobby. Near by lay three more red sequins.

Another half hour's futile search convinced him that nothing further toward locating the girl could be accomplished at the Yellow Moon. Distraught and weary, he drove back to Union City. He proceeded immediately to the hospital and knocked on the closed door. Almost immediately it was thrown open and Dr. Mastik stood framed in it.

Sid walked past him into the room. At the large desk sat Ketti Wagner. Both were dressed as he had seen them last at the Yellow Moon.

"This is an hour somewhat unusual for you to visit us, Mr. Ames," Mastik was beginning when Sid cut in sharply with, "Tonight Wanda Parsons accompanied me to the Yellow Moon at Hilton. Later she disappeared under very mysterious circumstances. I've got to know if she returned here."

Both Mastik and Ketti Wagner managed to look skeptical, but Ketti Wagner telephoned the nurses' home and inquired. Wanda was not there.

Leaving, Sid remarked casually, "You both were at the Yellow Moon tonight at about the time the girl disappeared. I thought maybe she had come back with you."

They stared stonily at him. Finally Ketti Wagner spoke. "You were mistaken, Mr. Ames. Good night."

As he pulled up before the Watkins House a big Cadillac parked beside him, in which sat Honey and her companions at the roadhouse. He questioned them brusquely. Their answers merely checked with what Honey had told him, and gave him no further lead.

Honey said her good nights and then walked silently with him toward the entrance to the hotel. He glanced once more at the caskets on either side—grim reminders of a desperate fear gnawing at his mind.

AT five o'clock Sid was up and dressed. A damp gray mist clung to the windows and screens. He peered out. The eerie mounds on the lawn were indistinct and almost chimerical in the early dawn.

Some impression had clung stubbornly to his subconscious mind through the brief hours of sleep. He closed his eyes. Etched in his mind was his walk with Honey last night past the grisly caskets shrouded with their canvas covers.

Then what he had been groping for hit him. One casket had had no covering on it.

At once he hurried downstairs and outside. He went to the uncovered casket. He lifted its hinged lid. Inside in her red sequin party dress lay Wanda Parsons. In death as in life she was lovely.

There were no marks of violence apparent except a small but livid bruise on the left side of her throat. From the blue-gray pallor of her skin, visible under the make-up, he conjectured that death had occurred through asphyxiation.

"Okay, Pulsudski," he said softly, almost as if to himself. "You won't know it, baby, but I'll see that somebody pays for this—and if I have any choice they'll do it the hard way."

SID hurried upstairs to the room occupied by Ike and Mike. Both were dressed. In a very few words he acquainted them with his discovery and gave them some orders.

A few minutes later he got into his car. He drove three times around the block in which Dr. John Mastik's private hospital stood before he was satisfied with his reconnoitering. Then, parking his car in the shadow of a group of trees, he quickly made his way to the garage. No one seemed to be about although one of the sliding doors was slightly open.

In the garage stood a new and modern ambulance, a Ford sedan, a Buick coupé and a large Buick sedan. His eyes gradually becoming accustomed to the comparative darkness, Sid began to search the Ford. He finally decided that, risk or no, he would have to use matches. These helped and soon he had finished the Ford and gone on to the coupé. Nothing there, either. He was about to start on the other sedan when a noise outside froze him into immobility. Footsteps were heading for the garage door.

His eyes frantically sought a place of escape or refuge. There was none. He crouched down as best he could behind the long black sedan. The footsteps came to the threshold—then continued past the door. Presently a door slammed somewhere else in the building and he heard the footsteps no more.

Sid heaved a sigh of relief and went hurriedly back to his search. The sedan, he concluded, had recently been thoroughly swept and vacuumed. He turned up the carpet on the rear floor. In a tiny crevice where the wooden floor boards joined the metal frame was a small red tear-shaped sequin.

He gazed at it for a moment, then inched it back with the blade of his knife into the small crack from which he had dug it. He laid the carpet over the flooring and affixed it to its fastenings. As he snapped the last clasp into place his final match gave out. Just then a low, almost guttural voice behind him said, "Back out slowly—with your hands clasped on top of your head."

His heart sank. He backed out as ordered.

"Now turn around," the voice commanded.

He did so. He was facing, four feet away, Dr. Mastik. The garage was not so dark that Sid could miss the blue steel of the revolver which the doctor held in his right hand and which he kept steadily trained on his chest.

"Ah," the doctor said. "You will tell me please immediately what it is you do here."

Sid shrugged. "There is no use trying to kid you, doc," he answered. "I came out here to see if I could find something to connect you up with the disappearance of that nurse of yours, Miss Parsons. You were at the Yellow Moon last night—you and that thermometer-shaped female of yours. You disappeared at about the same time that the girl did. I wanted to find out if there was any connection. But outside of learning that you keep your car neat, spick and span—" He brought his hands down from his head in a gesture of disappointment and emptiness.

"Mr. Ames," the doctor said, "you are stupid."

The gun was now raised at shoulder height and held straight out. He *meant,* Sid saw, to shoot him. To any impartial jury it would appear as a case of mistaken identity.

Sid took a small step toward Mastik. "You fool, you can't get away with it."

"Ah, yes. You see it is easy to outwit you, Mr. Ames. Just as I did when I surprised you here."

"You mean you knew I was here all the time?" Sid asked, stalling for time and inching slowly forward.

"But, of course," came the smug rejoinder. "I watched you as you around the block drove and followed your course as you crept to the garage. Then," he chuckled softly, "I walked boldly past the door to lull you into a sense of false security. You know the rest."

"Then that was you who passed here, five minutes ago?" Time—time. One more inch—two more—three more—and then maybe—

"Yes, of course." There was a sudden pause, then—"One more movement forward and I shall shoot. In fact," Mastik hissed in a barely audible voice, "I shall in any event shoot you now. Put your hands back on top of your head, Mr. Ames."

Sid's arms went up, but his hands did not go to the top of his head. Instead, shifting to the balls of his feet, he leaped for Dr. Mastik, his right fist connecting with the point of the man's chin.

There was immediately a loud report—and then a shattering noise as one entire plate-glass side of the new ambulance disintegrated under the force of the slug from the gun. Dr. Mastik's head snapped back, his legs tripped over the bumper of the sedan, and he crumpled up on the floor.

Sid did not pause to determine whether his Sunday punch had rendered the good doctor permanently hors de combat or had merely lulled him into temporary sleep.

A half hour later, from a pay phone on the far side of town he called the Watkins House and got Mike.

"A minute ago a cop sticks his head in the door," Mike said. "Now he's gone. But John Law is all over the hotel. They've found the girl and everybody in the flea bag has been questioned. Including I."

"Anybody ask any questions about me?"

"Don't know, boss," Mike responded.

"Did you find anything at Lamb's?"

"Not a thing, boss. I damn near took his car apart, too."

"How about Ike?"

"He says he practically stripped old Gregory's car but got nothing like you said might be there."

"Where's Honey?"

"We don't know, governor. We can't find her nowhere—that is, since she was questioned by the bulls."

"Great God!" Sid shouted. "Don't tell me that ape Wall has got hold of Honey! If he hurts or scares her I'll knock his thick head off. Keep in the clear—the two of you. And keep your eyes open. If things cool off a bit I may come back to the hotel. I'm just about ready to wrap this thing up. And when I do I may need your help."

He dialed again. This time he got Fern Vaughn.

"Fern," he asked quickly, "have you seen Honey?"

"Why, no, Sid," she answered readily.

"They've found Wanda. Dead," he told her bitterly. "And this time even your smug friends can't call it anything else but murder."

"Oh, Sid!" she cried, obviously shaken.

"Now will you admit you've gotten yourself into something deep?"

"But—but what shall I do? Sid, I'm frightened."

"Don't move out of your house and don't let anyone in—not anyone. And don't talk on the phone. Not until you hear from me. You know where that will is and somebody else knows you know it."

Before she could reply he hung up. He decided he might risk a return to the hotel.

When he flung open the door to his room and walked in, there sat Union City's plainclothes force—Alexander and McQuinn. He flung his hat on the bed and said angrily, "What are you two mugs doing in my room?"

Both men just looked at him. Then they looked at each other. The one known as McQuinn smiled owlishly. Sid started for him. Alexander halted him with, "Hold it, Ames, or so help me I'll blast you." He held his service revolver in his beefy hand.

"Then state your business and get the hell out."

Alexander nodded to McQuinn and said, "Frisk him."

"I'm not heeled," said Sid, biting off the words as though they hurt his teeth. McQuinn arose and frisked him.

"These two guns yours?" Alexander asked, pointing to two Colts on the bureau.

"They look like mine," Sid answered. "If you lifted them from my suitcase they are mine."

"Got permits for them?"

"You know damn well I have."

McQuinn suddenly thrust his mottled face up. "What made you croak the girl?"

Sid sat down on the bed suddenly and hard. Just as quickly he bounded to his feet.

"Why, you ugly fat slob," he roared. "I'll—"

"I'll let you have it if you get hot," Alexander said almost wearily.

Sid stopped. But he didn't cool off.

"You keep out of this, Mac," Alexander continued. "I'll handle it. Why don't you come clean, Ames? You'll feel better."

"I feel fine," Sid answered him. "Especially now I know you are as big an egg-sucking baboon as your partner. You say I bumped somebody. I don't know what you are talking about. You got a warrant with my name on it? If so, spring it. If not, get the hell out of here."

Alexander shrugged, "All right."

McQuinn picked up Sid's hat from the bed and tossed it to him. "You're going with us—on your feet or flat."

Sid walked out the door between them.

TEN minutes later they entered the basement office of Union City's police department. Chief Wall sat between the roll-top desk and flat table.

"Sit down, Ames." It was a command. Sid sat in one of the hard straight chairs facing the table. The two cops remained standing. He saw Wall glance at Alexander and the latter give a negative shake of his head. "You can make this easy on all of us, Ames, if you will," began the Chief. "We know you killed the girl. We've got motive and opportunity. We've even got a declaration of intent. You haven't got a chance. Why not make a clean breast of it?"

Sid looked at him amazed. The man actually seemed to believe what he was saying.

"Chief Wall," Sid said seriously, "I don't know what you are talking about."

Wall looked levelly at him. "So that's the way you mean to play it? All right. But remember I said you didn't have a chance."

He pushed a button on his desk. In a few moments Melvin Lamb came into the room. The Chief got hastily to his feet and Alexander and McQuinn all but pulled their forelocks. Lamb seated himself at the table near Wall's chair and the latter again sat down. The undertaker-commissioner spoke in almost sepulchral tones.

"Mr. Ames, I address you as police commissioner of Union City. Chief Wall is holding you for questioning in connection with a suspicion of murder. Murder of a young woman—a nurse whose name was Wanda Parsons. No charges have yet—ah—been preferred against you. But I am told that the evidence against you is—ah—so overwhelming that this is but a matter of hours—perhaps minutes. We would prefer that you—"

"Damn it!" Sid shouted, rising from his chair to be flung roughly back by the waiting Alexander. "Quit mouthing a lot of words—the two of you—and say something that makes some sense. Why should I do what you claim I've done? Somebody give me an answer to that."

Lamb nodded at Wall. The Chief picked up a sheaf of papers and pushed the button again. This time Struve Jovene was ushered in. The plump, balding little banker spoke pleasantly to Lamb and Wall, then turned friendly eyes toward Sid, but did not speak.

"Mr. Jovene," Wall continued, "is this the man who called on you early yesterday afternoon?"

"This man called at my office, yes."

"Is this a true transcript of a part of the conversation he had with you at that time?" At this point Wall cleared his throat and read from the papers in his hand:

"Ames—'Even a little blonde babe out at Mastik's hospital threatened that I'd better play ball, or else.'

"Mr. Jovene—'You say this girl threatened you?'

"Ames—'Yeah, in her own sweet way.'

"Mr. Jovene—'But then you should go to the police and report the matter.'

"Ames—'Forget it. I've got plans to take care of her later.'

"Mr. Jovene—'I still advise that you let the police handle it.'

"Ames—'From what I've seen of your police force, I wouldn't call them in on a piggy-bank robbery. The silver might be missing when they left.' "

"Is that," Wall repeated, "a true transcript?"

"As near as I remember it, yes," answered Jovene. "It is no doubt a true copy of my secretary's verbatim notes." A troubled look came into his face. "There were, of course, inflections and intonations which the Chief did not read into the speeches. Especially in the case of Ames. His conversation did not seem threatening or sinister."

"Nevertheless, the man said to you," Lamb interposed hurriedly, "that the girl—ah—threatened him and he had plans to take care of her later. Plans which he, alas, carried out. I call your attention also to the contempt he expressed for our law enforcement officers, showing plainly his confidence in eluding them after his act."

Jovene nodded, rather unhappily Sid thought, then with his eyes saying "Sorry old man," he went out.

"We are going to all this bother, Ames," Wall continued, "to give you a chance to confess. Understand, we have enough on you to go to the D. A. right now. But I'll be frank with you. It would be a feather in the department's cap to go in with a confession only a couple of hours after the crime was discovered. You come across and we'll do what we can to help you afterward."

"That's white of you, Chief," Sid answered.

"We thought you would see it our way, Ames," Melvin Lamb intoned. "And, of course, there is the assault charge which Dr. Mastik is prepared to make. My—ah—recommendation to you is that you throw yourself on the mercy of the—ah—court." With which he left the room.

AS soon as the door closed behind him Wall arose. "We'll show you a few things about persuading people to talk. Take him away, boys. Show him the goldfish."

The "goldfish bowl" of the Union City Police Department was one flight down into the sub-basement, an airless, unventilated storeroom. Sid's instincts were all in favor of slugging it out with the two policemen at once. But his better judgment prevailed. Just keep thinking—thinking—thinking until some plan sticks its head up, he told himself.

Alexander began using a three-foot length of rubber hose, McQuinn a club made of tightly rolled newspapers. It was obvious that this was an oft rehearsed and pleasurable ritual with them.

"You killed her, didn't you?" Alexander shouted. "You put that pillow over her pretty mouth and held it there until she died. Tell us about it."

Through the haze of heat and pain one phrase made its way into Sid's clouding mind. A pillow smothering the girl.

"You know we can keep this up all day," Alexander hurled at him.

"And never leave a mark on you," amended McQuinn.

"Can't you guys get any sense?" Sid said desperately. The room spun. "I didn't kill the girl. But I know who did." He slumped forward, then.

When he regained consciousness he was back in the chair in Chief Wall's office. Wall was facing him and staring stonily into his eyes. A little to one side sat Lamb, implacable and expressionless. In their usual corner stood Alexander and McQuinn, now in their shirtsleeves.

But there was something different. Gentle fingers were holding up his head. A small white hand waved a crushed ammonia ampule under his nostrils. A caressing voice asked, "How are you doing now, Sid?" It was Honey.

"Okay, Honey," he responded. "All I needed was a little air. I've been taking the sweat-cure. It isn't pretty."

"What's this?" interjected Lamb sharply. "You know I strongly disapprove of third-degree methods in this department."

"He hasn't had any third degree," broke in Wall. "You can see for yourself there isn't a mark on him."

"What are you doing here, Honey?" Sid asked suddenly.

"I ordered Miss Leighton held. We were questioning her when you were brought in," Wall said.

"You are an even bigger ass than I thought, Wall," Sid blazed. "The girl knows nothing—is not implicated in any way."

"She works for you, doesn't she?" Wall answered. "My men tell me you claim you did not kill the girl but know who did. Let's have it. And this time it better be good."

McQuinn strode over to the window at Wall's back and raised it for ventilation. Lamb began a long harangue, only a very small portion of which registered on Sid's consciousness. He was busy noticing that both Alexander and McQuinn had apparently left their revolvers in the sub-basement; that Wall carried no holster outside his uniform; that it was only a matter of ten feet to the open but screened window; that beyond it was a hedge, then an alleyway backed up by a high board fence.

Rising, he said, "You are right, Mr. Lamb. Everything you say is correct. And you, Chief Wall, you are as right as rain. It's high time I made a statement." While he talked he walked toward Wall. "I do know who killed Wanda Parsons. And now I know how and why. Just as I know who killed Mrs. Watson Gregory. But you probably won't believe me." Another foot now and he could try it.

"So," concluded Ames, "because I can't nail the killer while locked up here I'm going to leave you for a while."

Before the words were out of his mouth he was around the desk and past Chief Wall, had thrust Lamb out of his way and had made a headfirst dive through the open window. He was up on his feet running down the alleyway in a matter of seconds.

Melvin Lamb quickly recovered his balance. He drew a revolver from under his left armpit. With three strides he was at the window, while the Chief and his two detectives were still milling about and shouting.

Sid felt a sting on the left shoulder, and as he ran his left hand began to fill up with blood. He pressed his handkerchief into the palm, hoping that no telltale drops were setting up a trail behind him. He could hear the piercing whine of sirens as the police took up the chase.

A DILAPIDATED automobile suddenly blocked his passage across the street. In it sat the redoubtable Ike and Mike. In a moment he was in the back seat and it was proceeding. "I don't know how you boys happened to be here," he said fervently once he had got his breath, "but blessings on you."

Mike answered. "We saw the bulls take you out and we tagged. I told Ike to bring the rattler over just to have it handy if you wanted it kind of quick like."

Sid reached over and gave the little figure a squeeze on the shoulder. But an automobile would be one of the first places they would look for him. Where could he hide?

Suddenly it struck him. He gave Mike an address and directions for reaching it by a circuitous route.

His left side had begun to get stiff and sore and an area the size of a hat around the shoulder blade had commenced to burn feverishly by the time they pulled up a few doors below number 916. Ike, who had been exploring the wound and attempting to bind it with strips torn from his shirt, asked solicitously, "Hadn't we better look up a croaker, boss?"

Sid shook his head. "I'll be all right. Any doctor would turn me in or take me to a hospital."

"Not if we said no," answered Mike patting his coat pocket suggestively.

"All I need is some gunplay," Sid said. "Say, that gives me an idea. I may need that rod before you do, Mike. Wall's boys lifted both of mine."

Mike handed over his gun and Sid tucked it in his belt and buttoned his coat over it.

"In two minutes," he said rapidly, "I am leaving the car and walking up to that old-fashioned two-story house down the street. If I get up to the front door there without being seen, then my first big hurdle is over. Stay until you see me enter the house. I'm not certain there is anyone there. If I get in, go back to the hotel—."

"Aw, boss," protested Ike. "Why don't we wait right here? Maybe you'll want a car for a quick getaway."

"No," answered Sid firmly. "Any suspicious cars hanging around the neighborhood would only gum things up. Keep your eyes open and especially try to look out for Honey. The cops had her when I left them but I don't think they'll hold her." He grinned at the two solemn little faces as he climbed out of the car. "Wish me luck, boys," he said. "I may need it."

Sid pushed the doorbell once but nothing happened except the echo of its distant ringing. Finally a cautious voice whispered: "Who is it?"

"It's Sid. Open up, Fern. It's all right."

The door was quickly unbolted and as quickly he was in the house.

"Sid, you nearly frightened me to death," Fern said. "If I had only known it was you I'd have come to the door immediately."

"Who is here with you?" he asked.

"No one," she answered promptly. "Our one maid has deserted us and Uncle went into town to the bank after lunch. I've been here all alone since. And frightened to death." She gripped his arms and he could not avoid a wince of pain.

"What is it, Sid?" she cried in anxiety.

In few words he explained as they moved into the room in which he had seen Watson Gregory and Dr. Mastik.

"But you must have a doctor," she insisted.

"Believe me, beautiful," he answered, "there is nothing I'd like better. But right now that's the last thing I can afford to do. Wall is turning this town upside down for me. This is the last place they'll look for me until I want 'em to. I'll settle for a drink of rye. A big one."

She hurried out of the room and in a few moments was back not only with a bottle of good rye and a tumbler but with warm water, clean sterile cotton and bandages as well. Efficiently she went to work. The rye felt hot and good in his stomach and dulled the throbbing ache of his shoulder and arm.

When she had bandaged the sore areas, Fern slipped his coat carefully back on and insisted that he lie on the sofa. Then she drew a chair alongside him and lit two cigarettes, giving him one.

"Was Aunt Alicia really murdered?" she asked.

"There is no doubt of it. Nor about Wanda. Each was smothered with a pillow and by the same person."

"And you know who?" Her eyes were wide with fright.

Sid ignored the direct question. "I came here believing that, in view of the manner of your aunt's death, you'd like to help nail the person responsible for it."

"Oh, I would, Sid, I would so much."

"Then listen, beautiful," he said. He explained what he knew and what he wanted her to do. At the end she nodded indicating complete understanding. Before she left she spread a light silk comforter over him, and she placed the telephone extension on the floor where his right hand could reach it.

"The rye, too, beautiful," he said lazily smiling up at her. "If this damn wing of mine starts cutting up again I'll need the medicine."

She placed a small coffee table close beside the couch and on it the bottle and tumbler.

"You won't forget to call me immediately you've done what I asked, will you?" he said in parting.

"I won't forget, Sid," she answered, then bending over she kissed him lightly on the lips and went out.

WHETHER he had been asleep or in a mild coma Sid never knew, but when he next opened his eyes the normally dim old house was almost dark. When his eyes grew accustomed to the gloom he saw by the little French clock on the mantel that it was ten minutes past five—ample time for Fern to have done what she had gone to do.

He listened intently. Was that sound no more than the creak of the aging wood?

His entire left side ached and throbbed and the area around his shoulder was intensely painful. He shifted his position slightly to ease it. As he reached for the whisky bottle the peal of a telephone bell echoed through the house. With shaking fingers he groped and, finding the instrument, cradled it in his good arm so that he could manipulate both speaker and receiver in his one hand.

"Sid, are you there?" came Fern's low throaty voice.

"Yes, Fern," he answered. "Are you all right? Did everything go off as planned?"

"Yes to both questions, Sid. I found Uncle at the bank with Mr. Jovene. I made a clean breast of Uncle's and my plan to prevent Aunt Alicia from leaving her money to Dr. Mastik and our knowledge of the plot Dr. Mastik and Ketti Wagner had concocted to get it from her. Uncle was furious at first, but he gradually saw how important it was and substantiated everything I said."

"How did Jovene react?" Sid asked her.

"Surprised. I had to tell him of the counter-proposal Wagner and Mastik made me before he was convinced."

"Did you also let Jovene know that you had seen Mastik hand him the other copy of the will yesterday?"

"Yes. He said Mastik had asked him to turn it over to our lawyer. He got it out and we confirmed its terms."

"That's what I told you he would say. What next?"

"We called in Mr. Lamb and I told him your story. I said I had within the past hour seen you and got it from you. I told them," Fern went on, "that Mastik had plotted from the first to get control of Aunt Alicia's money. That your being hired by Uncle Watson hurried his plans and that he killed her. That an autopsy, which I would insist upon, would reveal she had no bad heart condition but was asphyxiated. I told them Wanda had witnessed the signing of the deed conveying the hospital property to Mastik and had seen two extra documents slipped under Auntie's pen. Then about Wanda's finding the copies."

"Wait a minute, Fern," Sid commanded sharply. He listened intently for a moment. "Do you have ghosts in this house? I hear mysterious noises all the time."

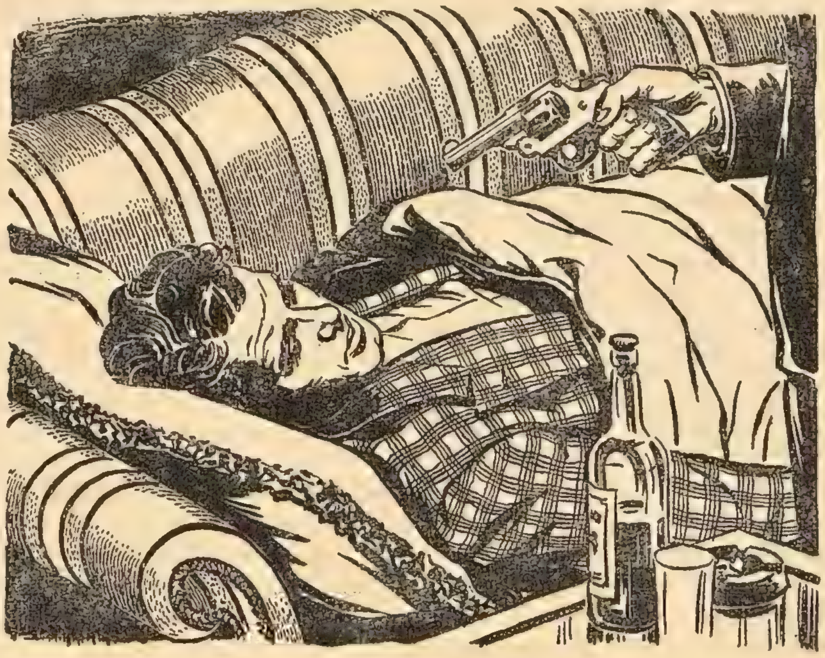
Her throaty laugh came over the phone. "We have creaks and cracks—just old boards complaining."

"Okay. I guess my nerves are a bit jumpy. Go on."

"I explained that when Wanda read the will she had mailed Uncle a copy with a note saying there was still one more copy. That Mastik had been suspicious of her and that when she had also seen what went on at the hospital night before last he had decided that she knew too much and was telling what she knew to you, so he followed her to the Yellow Moon and killed her."

"How did they take that?" Sid asked.

"They were incredulous until I told them you had proof of it and where they could find it in Mastik's garage. Then I told them you believed Wall was stupid and dishonest but could not afford to ignore this evidence and if given it would have to go after the killer. That if he refused, or Lamb as commissioner refused to order him to make an arrest, I was going to the district attorney. That did it, Sid. They agreed we had enough to go on and went with me to the police station where I repeated my story to Wall."



"Did anyone of the trio, Gregory, Jovene or Lamb, leave you during this time?" Sid asked hurriedly.

She paused a moment. "Why, yes, Mr. Jovene excused himself a few minutes at the bank before we went to the police station. Then there, both Uncle Watson and Mr. Lamb were out of the room briefly."

"Oh, lord," groaned Sid.

"Is it important, Sid?" she asked anxiously.

"I don't know," he answered, "Go on."

"We all went to the hospital. We found the evidence in the car, but when we got to the main building—oh, Sid, it's awful—Dr. Mastik was dead. He had shot himself."

"I figured that might happen, Fern," Sid said.

"He left a full confession that he had murdered Aunt Alicia by placing a pillow over her head and had killed Wanda the same way. He exonerated Ketti Wagner, who was his wife, from part in or knowledge of the murder. They are holding her on the extortion matter."

"Fern, did anyone ask you where I was and how you had got the story from me?"

"Why, I think all three, did—at one time or another."

"That's nice. Tell 'em?"

"Yes—oh, I hated to, Sid but they were so persistent. I said you were ill and wounded and had come to me for refuge. That you had given me all these facts but knew you couldn't make them stick if you tried it alone."

"Okay. You did all right. Where are you now?"

"At a pay station at the hotel."

"Are they all still with you, Fern?" He asked it casually but there was strain in his voice.

"Why, no, Sid, I'm alone. They left some time ago."

"That's fine, Fern—fine."

Then he rang off and put the phone down. His fingers were beginning to stiffen and for a few minutes he exercised them by working his hand into a fist and then relaxing it. His eyes felt heavy. Shoulder sore—hurt like hell—fever maybe—quick—cat nap—

When Sid again awoke he knew instantly that he was no longer alone in the old residence. He had heard nothing. But some sixth sense told him.

His good right arm hung down outside the coverlet, almost resting on the floor. His left, very nearly useless, was flattened against the back of the couch. He tried the finger exercises again.

The room lay in shadowy gloom now. Directly in front of him was a sinister black opening—the doorway into the hall. Had something moved there?

Little beads of perspiration formed at the base of his scalp and ran down onto his collar as he heard footsteps on the stairs. They reached the second floor level and hesitated. Then forward again—sure and deliberate.

There! That was a movement in the doorway this time. A figure stood before Sid. At six feet he could barely distinguish its outline. It moved cautiously to the couch, stopped and spoke in an almost inaudible whisper. "Ah, Mr. Ames," it said, "I had some difficulty in locating you."

Sid stared up into the somber eyes and long bony face of Melvin Lamb. His nerves were calm now and his pulse quiet. "I've been expecting you," was all he said.

"Then you knew your little ruse would not deceive me long?" Lamb asked softly.

"I couldn't know, of course. I hoped it might."

SID shifted his body. His shoulder pained again.

"Make no sudden movement, Mr. Ames," the undertaker quickly interposed. "And keep your right arm and hand outside the coverlet where I can see them. I am holding a revolver. Now, the left arm and hand where I can see them, please."

Sid spoke bitterly: "If you want my left arm out you'll have to move it yourself. I've been carrying a slug in it for four or five hours."

"Ah, so I did not miss, after all? Even with the distraction of that clawing young female." He reached down and grasped Sid's left shoulder and shook it with calculated brutality. As the agony slowly receded Sid dimly heard the voice droning on. "Why did you plan this ruse to divert attention to the Mastiks?"

"Because they had it coming to them. And it was the only way I could drive you out into the open."

"And you think that it will do you any good?"

Sid could see the long horse-shaped face now quite distinctly. "I had to take that chance, Lamb," he answered. "Things pointed to you from the start. Your greed for power and for money was obvious. You owned or controlled most of the local businesses and exerted strong pressure on the others. It was fairly obvious, too, that you were unscrupulous, dishonest, and completely ruthless."

"You flatter me, Mr. Ames," Lamb said unctuously.

"From your egomaniacal point of view I probably do." Sid was flexing his fingers. "Certainly when you saw a plum like old Mrs. Gregory's millions lying about, you wanted a share of it. *You* brought the Mastiks here—not Jovene, although you arranged it so it was generally thought that he did. You must have had enough on the doctor and his woman to bring them to heel."

"They were an improvident, starving pair of refugees when I picked them up," interposed Lamb.

"Of course," Sid said, "you should have kept those wills yourself. Mastik was careless. When one of the copies was stolen you began to worry. Then I came into the picture. That was another threat. Especially when your thugs failed to run me out of town as you had ordered."

That damn pain again. He couldn't take it much longer.

"There isn't much more. You went to the hospital that night after I had been reported there. You decided the plan had to be speeded up. Mastik and Ketti Wagner protested, but you went to Mrs. Gregory and smothered her with her own pillow."

"It was very easy—very simple," said Lamb as if enjoying the memory of it. "It should have been done earlier. That was that fool Mastik's fault. Ketti was willing— But go on, Mr. Ames."

"Then the girl Wanda worried you. You were pretty sure she had stolen the copy of the will. And you were afraid she had seen too much that night. When you found us together in Mrs. Gregory's room the next morning and then going out together that night, you ordered the Mastiks to follow us and to shut her up somehow. It was sheer luck you were asked to go to the Yellow Moon by Fern Vaughn. You must have told the Mastiks to grab the girl if they could and to take her out the fire exit."

"Very reasonable deduction, Mr. Ames. Now *I* congratulate *you*."

I'm going out like a light soon, Sid told himself. He shook his head to clear his vision and went on:

"Watching for a chance when the lobby was clear, Mastik slugged the coat-room girl. Then he and Ketti Wagner stayed close by the ladies' room to waylay Wanda. When we stopped on the way out to talk with that couple, you slipped out the performers' door, went around to the fire exit, and they let you in. Honey saw you in the lobby. You and Mastik ducked back into the corridor when Wanda came out of the ladies' room. Wagner called to her and maneuvered her into the corridor. When Wanda saw you and Mastik there she screamed. One of you grabbed her by the throat and the other one slammed the door to the lobby. In a few seconds you had her out through the fire exit and in the back of Mastik's car where you throttled her with a pillow from the lounge."

"Strange, she was easier than the other one," Lamb said, his eyes almost shining in the gloom.

"Mastik and Wagner put her body in that casket. I suppose they thought that would appeal to you."

"Mr. Ames, you are a better detective than I thought."

"One thing still puzzles me," Sid said working the fingers of his left hand in and out, clenching and opening his fist. "Why was Mastik at Watson Gregory's house the first night I came here?"

"I sent him there to tell Gregory that his employing a detective had so upset his wife that it was doubtful if she would live until morning. Of course, she did not."

Sid closed his eyes again. "There's just one thing more. Mastik didn't shoot himself this afternoon. Ketti Wagner did that at your orders. The 'confession' was written by her afterward. Good enough forgery to stand up, no doubt, with a little political influence and power behind it."

"You continue to amaze me, Ames," Lamb said, his voice smooth as flowing oil now. "You might even be interested in knowing why I came here. Why I wasn't content to let matters rest so neatly as you had arranged them. I had lost the money, of course—the will would have been disallowed—but Mrs. Gregory was dead, the nurse done away with, a confession by Dr. Mastik to both crimes and then his convenient suicide. But you were my real danger. You understood what had really happened and would never be content until you pinned both crimes on me. Then when the girl told us where you were and that you were ill, that opened up a new vista to me. How easy to write the last chapter—how very, very easy."

"And so you—" Work those fingers harder—build that circulation—move that wrist.

"Yes, Ames." There were mad lights dancing in the undertaker's eyes now. "That is, of course, what I came here to do. It's really very simple. You are in pain from your previous wound. You cannot stand it—it drives you mad." Lamb was shouting now—little flecks of foam appearing at the corners of his mouth. "Mad with pain—you shoot yourself—in the temple—"

He whirled to face the doorway as one of those eerie cracks suddenly echoed through the old mansion.

"What was that? Did you hear it, Ames?"

IN that second, Sid called upon all his will and his ailing left hand closed over the hard cold steel of Mike's gun. The fingers worked the revolver from his belt.

"Damn you, Ames," the crazed undertaker was shouting, "you will be the sweetest of the lot to me! It was you and your stumbling interference that ruined my plans. Now you will pay for it—a suicide—in the temple—and when they find you the gun will be clasped tightly in your hand—a cadaveric spasm. So you see, I, Melvin Lamb, have closed the case—not you."

Lamb swayed forward, drooling, his gun hand swinging in an arc toward Sid's head.

Sid squeezed the trigger of his gun with the same clenching movement he had been practicing for the past half hour. There followed a terrific explosion. Lamb's head jerked suddenly backward and a look of incredulity passed over his face, replaced by a glassy stare.

Sid shot him again as he fell.

"That last one was for you, Pulsudski," he said softly.

The echoes of the shots were still reverberating when the telephone rang. He scooped up the instrument.

"Oh, Sid, Sid!" Honey's soft voice full of anxiety came over the wire. "They've just told me where you are. I'm coming at once. Is everything all right?"

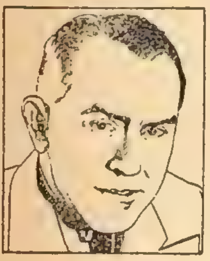
"Everything is strictly all right, baby," he answered with closed eyes. "Everything is fine."

THE END

BOOKS IN REVIEW

By Helen Greenwood

WILLIAM CHAPMAN WHITE, who wrote **The Pale Blonde of Sands Street**, has done a remarkable job of blending realism and fantasy into a charming book.



William Chapman White

It is the story of Katie Morrison, an Irish counter girl, who met and fell in love with a sailor early one foggy morning in Brooklyn. The sailor, Johnny Smith from South Dakota, had dreamed of five things he wanted to do on his twelve-hour leave in New York. The first was to meet a girl, the second was to have breakfast at the Waldorf, the third was to have a picture taken to show his shipmates, and the fourth was to smell grass again. Johnny's fifth wish was spoiled because of a misunderstanding and because of the O'Flaherty coin—the coin that granted all wishes—"If the possessor can find someone they love who wants the same thing with them."

It was Mrs. O'Geoghan who told Katie Morrison about the O'Flaherty coin after Johnny had vanished, for Mrs. O'Geoghan naturally knew all about the Irish who: " 'can always believe easily in miracles—without them how would there be an Ireland? It's the simple everyday facts of life we find beyond understanding.' "

Mrs. O'Geoghan told Katie about another power that blessed the possessor of an O'Flaherty coin: " 'He could, if he wished it as he lay down at the end of a day, roam the broad world by night while asleep looking for someone he loved, with never a guarantee that he'd find what he sought. That was what my grandmother used to call the luck of the Irish—always set with bans and limitations and never guaranteed.' "

And that was how it happened that a pale blonde woman would suddenly appear to lonely sailors on the decks and in the passageways of the Navy's ships at sea and ask "Do you know Johnny Smith?" until the magic of the O'Flaherty coin granted her wish.

Published by The Viking Press, N. Y. Price $2.50.

APPLEJACK FOR BREAKFAST, by **Helen and Alfred Campbell**, is the light-hearted story of a farming experiment by two enthusiastic amateurs.

Alfred Campbell

The brave Campbells bought a farm in Pennsylvania and proceeded to learn about agricultural life the hard way.

There is a completely charming description of the birth of a calf: "It lay for a moment, motionless, while Diana stood looking dreamily into the distance. Then the calf lifted its head and gave a plaintive bleat. The mother was electrified. Her ears pricked up, she turned quickly and answered with an unbelievably gentle, loving call. From head to tail she nosed over her offspring, then began systematically to lick it dry."

Published by Charles Scribner's Sons, N. Y. Price $2.50.

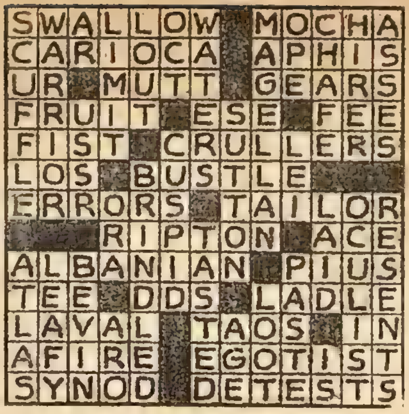
THE ubiquitous Arthur Crook rides again in **Anthony Gilbert's** new mystery, **Death Lifts the Latch.**

Nurse Nora Deane was summoned to a case in the middle of the night, and before morning her patient had died. That was the beginning of a series of shattering experiences for pretty Nora—experiences that culminated in a daring rescue by Mr. Crook and the mysterious young man called Sammy.

Published by Smith and Durrell, N. Y. Price $2.

COCKEYED CROSSWORD

By Ted Shane



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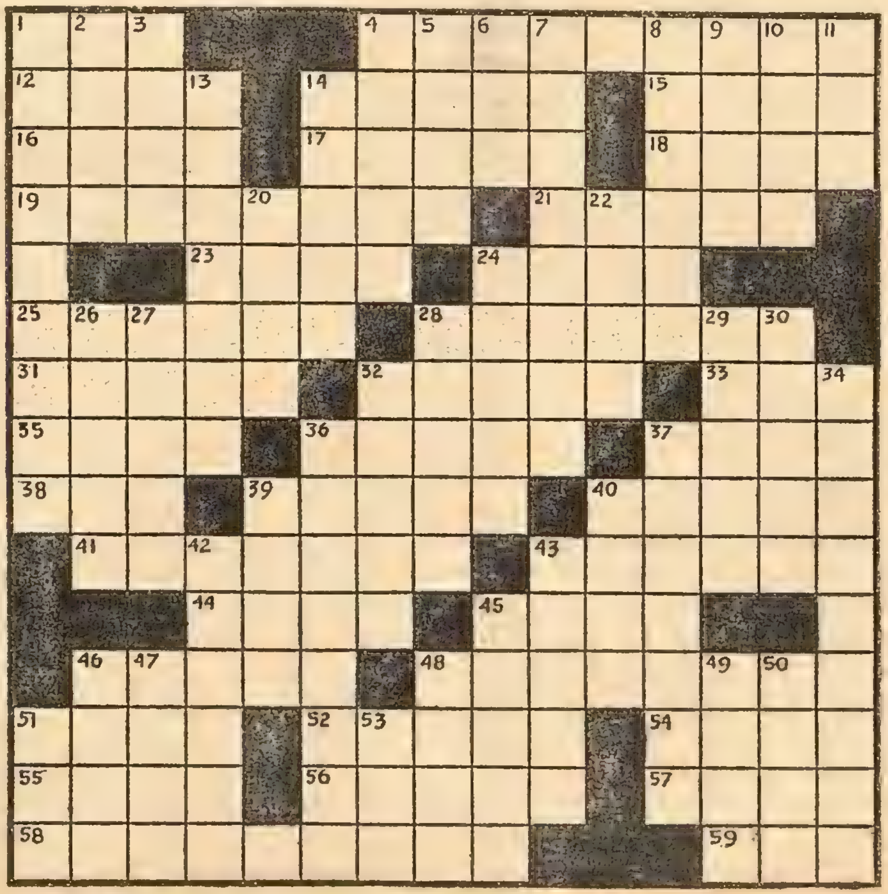
Last week's answer

HORIZONTAL

1 World's most peaceful fighting organization
4 Extra! Petrillo Resigns! Russia Goes Capitalist! Unions Dissolve! Shane Has Funny Definition! (two words)
12 Tide within affairs of men
14 Rat trap
15 Wolf, *extinct variety*
16 Rose thorns make you this (anag.)
17 What Wally calls Windsor
18 As of ——
19 Peronizes
21 Turnip with b.o.
23 Houter covering of many hanimals
24 Stalin's great at thinking one up
25 Kind of bullet
28 The drain was slow because it was this
31 You'll have to use the old bean on these
32 They have the most delectable legs in France and do they get fried!
33 Sailor's outfit
35 The old French fizz
36 Tribute taken, not given
37 Madness caused by itch you can't scratch
38 Spelled backward, it's Zed, the new Zudsy Zoap
39 It takes lots of pluck to play them
40 Old parlor sofa on wheels
41 Abominates
43 Royal substitute
44 Last word of warning
45 What the Greek did to a coupla bucks on a hoss
46 Place they get sunflationary prices for everything
48 Occidental face
51 Head bobs
52 First vice-presidentess in charge of waterworks
54 Dutch schmierkase
55 Chassis for initialed hearts
56 Parlor, bedroom, and bath in Paradise (pl.)
57 Every fella's got one
58 People we owe everything to, the trustful souls!
59 What the Jap had for the millionaire's daughter

VERTICAL

1 State of the Union
2 Night light
3 Cheap wooden engines for small boats
4 Los Rockies de Down Under
5 Pea jackets
6 French king
7 Ism
8 What Hitler's doing in hell
9 What I'd like to see chopped off the public debt and added to my income
10 Dog-patch pronoun
11 He led an unsuccessful fight on the Union
13 Bird with built-in fish cannery
14 What doctors do to *umbilici*
20 Inside cooling devices
22 They drive men to drink
24 Most abused things in Hollywood
26 Rubbed the wrong way
27 What flying elephants do
28 Bucoliconversationalistopic (pl.)
29 Make a meal of à la Ma Nature
30 Where young folks get together
32 What life begins after for musicians
34 Person who'd never strike a woman with his hat on
36 Man's fruit basket (a lot of kicking's done against it)
37 Where there's a will there's a this
39 Ship's director
40 What young onions and debs come in
42 Got the male man all adither (fem.)
43 They rustle around in swamps for their living
45 Cowmestibles
46 He'd fight against the devaluation of the Franco
47 Kind of rich and motionless
48 Tie-up in shipping circles
49 How many an old stand-by stands by during trouble
50 It's caused by Neptune breathing out heavily
51 Red Network (abbr.)
53 More excitement, more people killed



The answer to this puzzle will appear in next week's issue.

Calvert
RESERVE
Clear Heads Choose

"So that's why they gave up the chase"

AND who, we ask, *wouldn't* prefer to catch up with a gloriously smooth Calvert highball? Calvert's a prize definitely worth bagging. It's *the real thing*... so mellow and rich, imitating it is just out of the question!

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Calvert Distillers Corp., N. Y. C. BLENDED WHISKEY 86.8 Proof. "Reserve" – 65% Grain Neutral Spirits... "Special" – 72½% Grain Neutral Spirits

THEY'RE CRAZY TO RUN!

Continued from Page 21

Dill. The results of those tests have never been published, but Dr. Robert Johnson, assistant professor of industrial physiology at Harvard, reports that the findings were not too conclusive because of the individual differences among the competitors.

"We were particularly interested in the effect of sugar on the runners," explains Dr. Johnson. "We thought extra sugar might help them, particularly because we found that the first ten finishers usually had a better sugar store in their bodies than the runners who finished later. In 1937 we fed sugar to several of the men, but there was no correlation between the sugar and the place they finished. A few told us that they thought the sugar helped, but others disagreed. Johnny Kelley, for example, didn't go along with us at all."

Kelley is the 115-pound Irishman who has won the B.A.A. race twice and has been second six times in the last decade.

That business about Kelley and the sugar has an interesting aftermath and serves as the best proof of what faddists the marathoners are. In 1937 Kelley told the Harvard doctors that he didn't think sugar was any help, but after winning the race last year, he told reporters, "On the advice of the postmistress out in West Acton, where I live, I ate a lump of sugar just before the race and three more lumps while I was running. I think the sugar did the trick."

Kelley, now thirty-eight, is probably the greatest faddist of them all. After his victory in 1935 he attributed his improved strength to a series of scientific treatments that included everything from ultraviolet rays to sweat baths.

BUT even the extreme faddists agree that their chief problem is their feet. Heart and lungs are important, but legs and feet are the secret of marathoning success. The podiatrists had their biggest day in 1928, when cocky Joe Ray, twice an Olympic miler, turned marathoner overnight and covered the course in ordinary running shoes. Joie finished third. As he staggered across the finish line, his battered shoes actually oozed blood.

He passed out in the clubhouse elevator. The doctors cut his shoes off, but they had to soak his feet for almost half an hour before they could separate his socks from raw flesh. "Aw, that race wasn't so tough," bragged Joie when he regained consciousness, but he almost passed out again when he saw his feet.

Because of the importance of their feet, the marathoners permit themselves the single luxury of having their shoes custom made. The best are of white kangaroo.

The rest of the marathoning costume depends upon the weather. On hot days the runners get down to the skimpiest possible attire. On cold days they wear everything except horse blankets. Mellor hit probably the all-time high for sartorial embellishments on that bitter day in 1925 when he covered the entire route wearing long underwear, a sweat shirt padded with a morning newspaper, a knitted skating cap, and a pair of white cotton gloves like those worn by the end men in a minstrel show.

Perhaps the best picture of the marathon can be obtained from the clubhouse scenes rather than from the race itself. The excitement starts on the holiday morning in Hopkinton, a rural community about twenty-five miles from Boston. Race headquarters are at the Tebeau Farm, which has come to be known as Marathon Inn. The B.A.A. pays fifty dollars for the use of the house in the forenoon. All furniture is moved to the barn, so the bare rooms are ready for the descent of runners and officials at about 9.30 A.M.

The runners hit the house like scurrying mice, seeking out little private nooks and crannies as sanctuaries for their last-minute preparations. Some rub themselves with unguents; others eat vitamin pills or swallow modern witch's potions.

The one formality comes in the living room, where each runner undergoes brief pulse, heart, and blood-pressure examinations and is weighed and measured, with all readings being charted carefully. The examination is far from perfunctory, for each year the doctors rule out an average of five entries.

The men then check in with the race manager. They pay their entry fee of a dollar, if they have not already done so, and certify that they hold registration cards in the Amateur Athletic Union. In the final analysis, that governing body is the real barrier that prevents absolute screwballs from competing.

Promptly at noon the runners are on their way from the bucolic splendor of Hopkinton to the crowd-lined streets of Boston proper.

The race itself is side-lighted by the swarm of official cars. Half a dozen pick-up cars and ambulances buzz back and forth over the route, inviting stragglers to ride to the finish line. Approximately half the average starting field of 175 succumb, but a few hardy souls remain adamant to all blandishments even though they cross the line three or four hours after the winner. The B.A.A. maintains a finish-line vigil until four thirty, although most of the good runners are in by three o'clock. The scene in the clubhouse after the race completes the picture. In one room, the morning glories, freshly showered and powdered after running only three or four miles, are making a mass assault on the free lunch, of which the main course from time immemorial has been thick beef stew. In an adjoining room are the ones who really need the stew but haven't the strength to get it. They are the boys who go the route and wind up in a state of temporary collapse. They lie around on dozens of cots and rubbing tables, waiting for the foot men to daub their blisters and soothe their barking dogs. They try not to notice the fellow over at the sink in the corner, whose overworked stomach is rebelling, or the one who is wincing under the jab of a needle as a worried doctor administers a shot of digitalis.

AFTER the excitement dies down, Tom Kanaly sets up his court in an adjoining room, just as he has been doing for forty years. First he calls for the check lists, which show the positions of the runners at six different stages of the race. A man's number must appear on each check list as proof that he actually covered the whole course.

Satisfied that the order of finish does not include some prankster who hopped out of an automobile a couple of miles from the clubhouse, Kanaly proceeds to hand out the munificent awards. The winner gets a gold medal set with a diamond chip. The next seven finishers receive ornate trophies. Finishers nine to thirty-three get bronze medals. And the other finishers get nothing more than their names in the newspaper summaries.

Those meager prizes always start people wondering anew why the runners bother. Bob Campbell, New England champion at all distances from three to ten miles at one time or another, has a prompt answer: "Publicity, that's all. Marathoners get to be real public figures. If I'm running a six-mile race against Kelley or Pawson, nobody knows me, but they all know the marathoners. Good luck to them. I wish I could win one."

(*Continued on page 54*)

"Stop, or I'll scream!" LIBERTY

Scenes like this are typical of the Lincoln Highway and Pike's Peak Highway

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You Meet the Real America!

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The millions who go by Greyhound get an *extra* bonus of scenic travel—the experience of meeting the real America close up . . . for these are pleasures you'll find *Only by Highway.*

GREYHOUND

(*Continued from page 52*)

About ten years ago a Boston reporter tried to find out the hard way, by running the race himself. Although his findings were inconclusive, his story remains an epic in newspaper circles. For posterity he records: "I cannot imagine any torture worse or more stupidly masochistic. And that is why my first marathon is my last."

He also used up some precious breath along the route by asking other stragglers why they bothered to run. The most startling answer was, "Because my brother-in-law asked me to." The frankest was, "Because I'm a damn fool like you, I suppose."

Those answers aren't good enough to explain the minister who gloried in leading the race for a few miles each year so the reporters could write: "Pastor So-and-so led his flock in the early stages." Nor do they explain why another clergyman came down from Maine every year to celebrate his wedding anniversary by running the B.A.A. race, while his wife had her own private celebration back home.

ABSENT from this week's race will be old Peter Foley, an amazing character who ran the full marathon course at the age of eighty-five. Peter didn't start running until his forties, but he became so enthusiastic about the sport that he entered annually until B.A.A. authorities set an age limit of fifty-five.

This didn't stop Peter. For years he took off sixty seconds before the regular start. But when his friends complained that they couldn't wait long enough for him at the finish, he staged a little private marathon all his own, starting at 10 A. M. instead of at noon. This enabled him to reach the crowded areas just before the leader. If he timed things correctly, he ambled across the finish line about five minutes ahead of the legitimate winner.

There's no mystery about the race to the runners themselves, and this week they will be shooting at the B.A.A. course record of 2 hours 26 minutes 51 1/5 seconds set in 1942 by Joe Smith, a galloping milkman.

As usual, Kelley heads the U. S. contingent that includes Lloyd Bairstow, a twenty-four-year-old Coast Guardsman who is heralded as the top hope for the 1948 Olympic team; pharmacist's mate Charlie Robbins; and Don Heinicke, the Baltimore veteran who has finished from second to sixth in each of the past seven years.

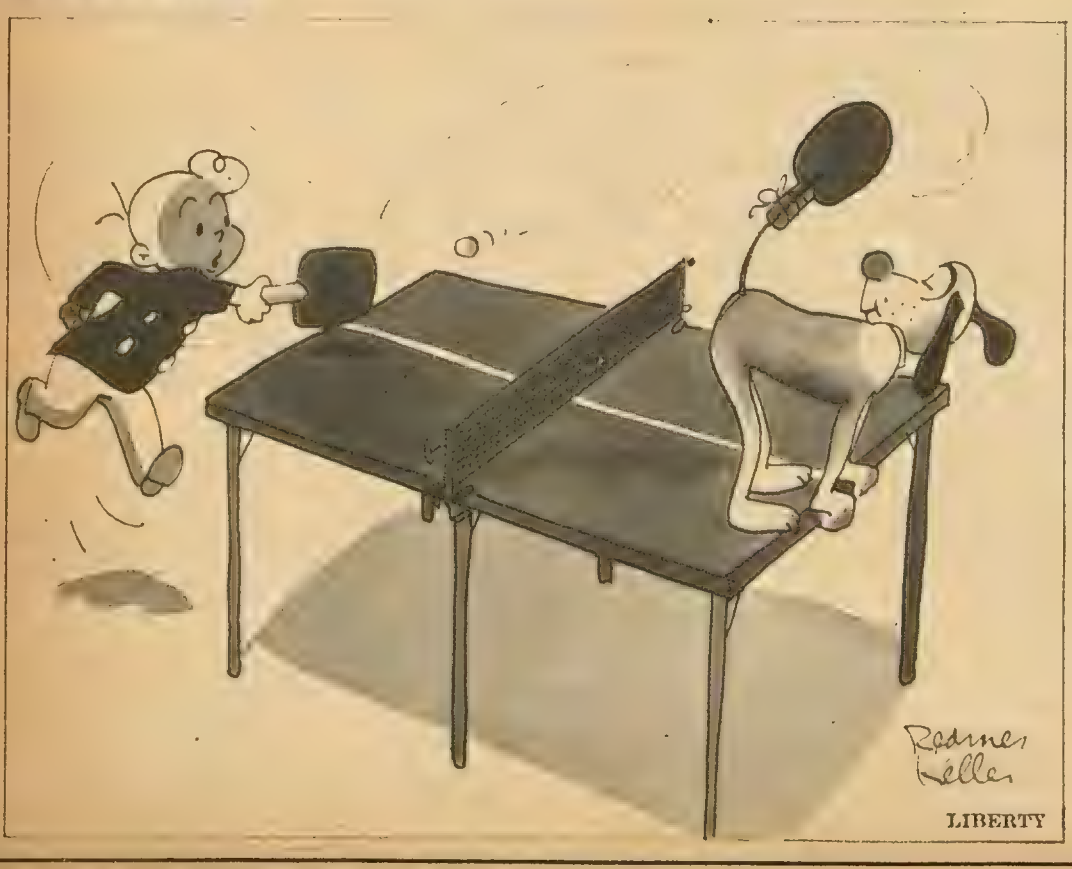
Cote, back after a stretch in the Canadian Army during which he won a couple of European distance championships, heads the contenders from the north country. The thirty-eight-year-old Scotty Rankine of Preston, Ontario, will take another crack at the race, but he probably will be more interested in the showing of his twenty-eight-year-old protégé, Ab Morton. Also among the foreigners may be one Kenneth Baily of Bournemouth, England, who planned to fly here and uphold his proud title as Britain's "Public Energy No. 1."

All the best will be on the line, imitating old Paul Revere and Pheidippides, who started the whole thing. But is it all a sad mistake? The late William Watson Goodwin, professor emeritus of Greek at Harvard and one of the country's foremost Greek scholars, examined all available manuscripts, agreed that there was a military courier named Pheidippides, but reported that he could find no evidence to support the claim that the courier ever ran from Marathon to Athens.

It's a fine time to find that out.

THE END

HARDTACK



SKULDUGGERY

Continued from Page 27

"I could hardly call you Blondy," I said weakly.

"Does that have to be settled immediately?" she asked. "I'm on my way to see my fiancé, Dr. Manstead, for the first time in six months. It's hardly the thing for you to keep me dallying here." She whisked by me into the elevator.

So this was Dr. Mildred Dufrater! I entered my study, feeling deeply perturbed. I had never in my life "dallied" with a woman, and the accusation startled and interested me. I finally decided that I should look for her and assure her that I had intended no presumption. In all probability she would consult with Dr. Yellon after her reunion with her fiancé. So I went to Yellon's rooms.

AS I had guessed, she was there, though I hadn't guessed that Yellon would have produced for her his special sherry.

"A new turn to the picture, Stoddard!" he exulted. "Dr. Dufrater discovered the original site. She has an equal right with Manstead to that excavated material!"

She motioned me to sit beside her on the couch. "Not exactly that," she corrected. "Here's the story, Dr. Stoddard. I did find the site myself. Then mother fell ill and I had to come home. But there was a verbal agreement that Raymond and I were to have equal access to the material, though it remains his property, since he financed the expedition. It's quite understandable that he doesn't want anyone to steal his thunder. But I don't see why on earth he shouldn't allow you men to examine the skull —under a gentleman's agreement."

"I wouldn't anticipate his findings," Dr. Yellon promised pitifully, "but I might at least avoid certain errors in my book."

"You've seen the skull?" I asked her.

She was grim. "*Homo Mansteadiensis*, as he calls it? Only partially. I had to leave before it was thoroughly excavated. But it's completely exposed now, he admits. And he's already drafting his notes."

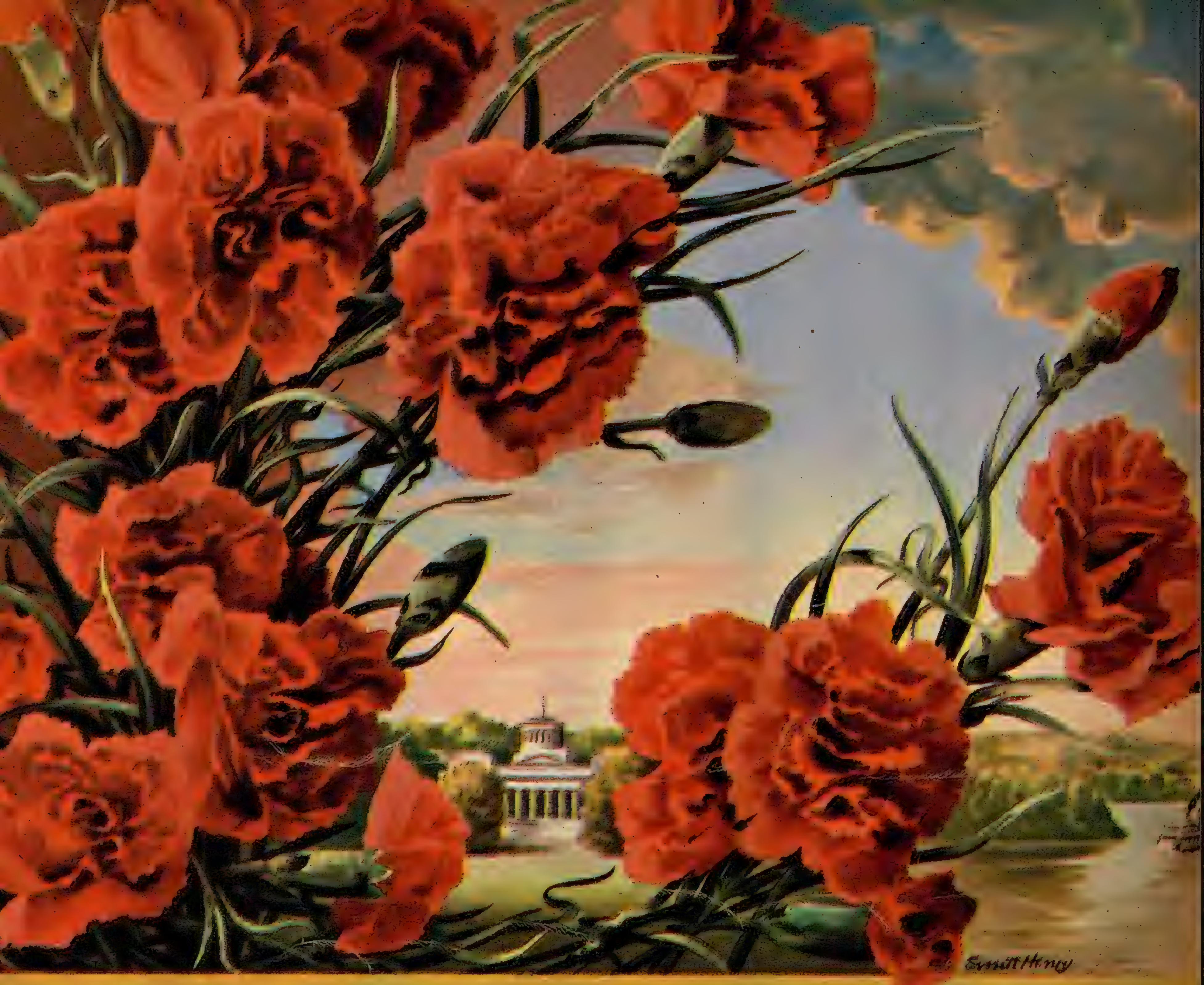
"Then why doesn't he let the rest of us in on it?" Yellon bellowed.

"Where's your psychology?" Dr. Dufrater demanded. "Raymond is eating a piece of candy as slowly as possible in front of a dozen small boys." Her eyes twinkled. "The wait will be long, I'm afraid. There's still a half-ton crate of other material that he hasn't examined."

Yellon groaned. "I'm not interested in his crate or other toys. I want a look at that skull."

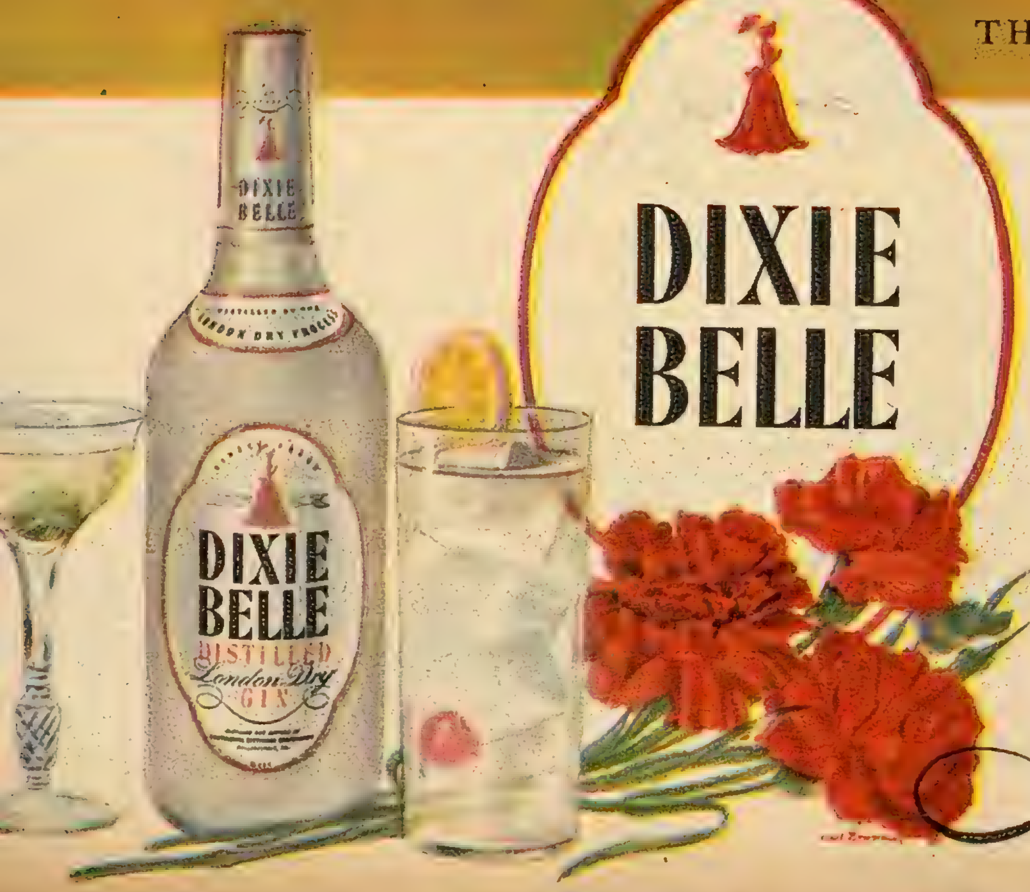
"Well," I said, "you, Dr. Dufrater, certainly have a right to see that material. But we wouldn't want to start trouble between you and your fiancé." This was a deliberate false-

(*Continued on page 56*)



A Favorite in Flowers

THE CARNATION — State Flower of Ohio



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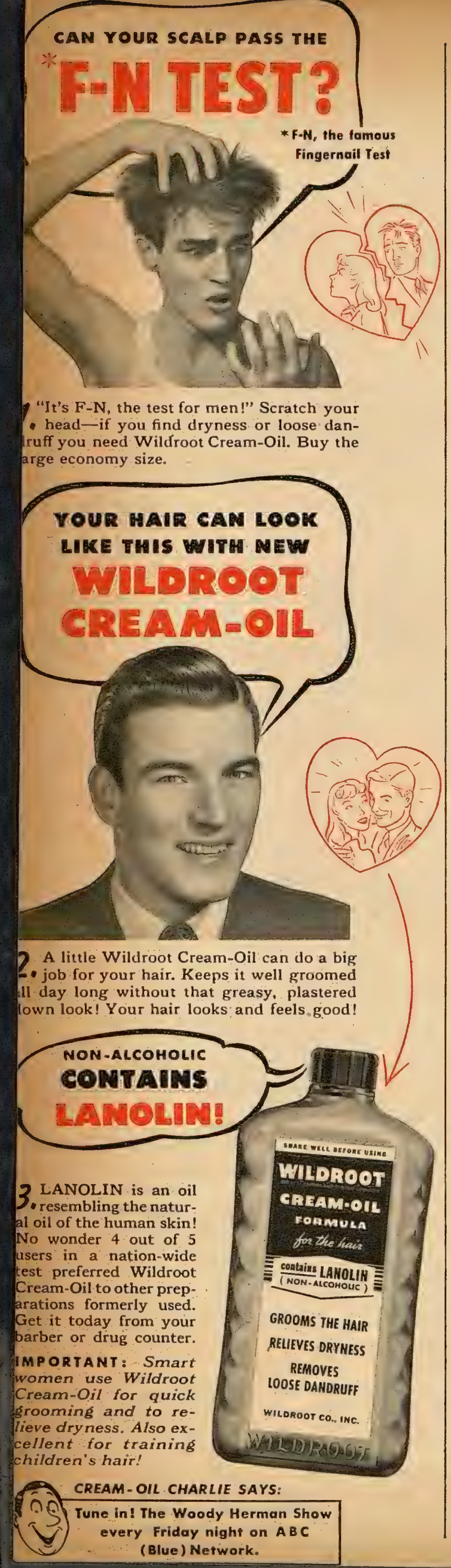
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(Continued from page 54)

hood, as I really should not have minded at all.

"I've just been telling Dr. Yellon that the engagement is broken," she said. "It lasted until I asserted some claim on the material. Evidently Raymond's sudden fondness for me dated from my discovery of the site." I couldn't see that she looked too heartbroken. "I must also admit," she added coolly, "that Dr. Manstead does not possess the same appeal that he had when he was the only white male within several hundred miles. However, Dr. Stoddard," she slid her green eyes around at me suddenly, "who am I to quarrel with biology and the devious ways into which it leads the female of our species?"

Dr. Yellon said reflectively, "I do not find you devious. It is a genuine pleasure to know you, Dr. Dufrater." They smiled at each other like two very old friends, and I felt a bit out of it. "But you should have been more subtle with Manstead this afternoon."

"Too late now."

"Yes."

We sat in gloomy silence while Dr. Yellon absent-mindedly refilled his glass twice and mine once. Finally I broke that silence: "Dr. Dufrater has a right to see that material. She has an equal right to let us see it under certain conditions of secrecy. Dr. Manstead has refused her that access. So normal means have failed. He has all three keys to the laboratory on the sixth floor. So normal methods of entry are denied us. There is, however, a freight elevator. Due to fire regulations, none of the doors giving access to the freight elevator possesses a lock. The elevator can only be locked from the basement. You, Dr. Yellon, must have one of those keys."

They stared at me as I continued: "It's my suggestion that at a suitable hour tonight we should go to the sixth floor via the freight elevator. We'll all look at the skull. Agreed?"

"Stoddard," Dr. Yellon commented, "for the first time I can really see you as a cloak-and-dagger man. Before that, the mind apprehended but the heart did not accept. Help yourself to the sherry." And he picked up the telephone.

IT was amazing how quickly the university's cogs were set in motion to bring to Yellon's office the following scholars: Dr. Cathermire; Dr. Dana, addressing a woman's club on The Integrity of the Anthropological Professor; Dr. Forsyth, mousing among his fossils; Dr. Cartier, and finally—literally snatched from the Chicago plane on which he was about to depart—the great Professor Jedlicka. They were there within forty-five minutes. I shall never forget the ringing peroration with which Dr. Yellon broached the proposition:

"Gentlemen, in the name of that greatest and most human research to which we have dedicated our years and our efforts, in the name of that shining mistress who owns our eternal fidelity, in the name of Anthropology, I have asked you to gather here tonight"—he paused and coughed—"to join me in committing a slight infraction of the laws of our commonwealth."

It was close on midnight when we all crowded into the freight elevator. We were not so quiet as we should have been, for Dr. Yellon, in order to still the qualms of certain colleagues, had dispensed his sherry (his second best) rather unwisely. But when we stepped into the laboratory suite, we moved silently enough. Our search was vain. No skull was visible. Our eyes turned toward the great vault in the corner, and Dr. Yellon's hands moved over its dial. That gesture, too, was futile. Manstead had had the combination changed. Professor Jedlicka stroked his silvery beard. His eyes were fanatic.

"Well, gentlemen, *Homo Mansteadiensis* is apparently beyond our reach—in the vault. But no true scholar admits himself entirely defeated. Here is this other crate, equally Mildred's property. What may be there? A tibia, a femur—who knows? It's my suggestion, with Mildred's consent, of course, that we remove the crate to the basement and examine it at our leisure." (I don't remember when we all started calling Dr. Dufrater Mildred. With the third sherry, probably.) We had not stopped with a third, however, and I noted that our entire little group had an air of gaiety and valor.

A SUGGESTION from Jedlicka is a command. The crate weighed at least half a ton, but it was still on the wheeled platform from which it had been moved out of the elevator. I am six foot five, a fact which I had deplored during my war service, when the secret nature of my work would have been simplified if I had been less conspicuous. But now, as I pushed the crate into the elevator, I was glad of that generally useless brawn. Mildred and I perched on top of the crate and went down with it, the rest of them waiting for its second ascent.

So far, good. But the remainder of the evening's efforts were to be more difficult. We had barely ripped one board from the top of the crate when a sepulchral voice echoed down the elevator shaft: "Anyone there?" Cathermire turned green.

"Manstead!" he gasped. "You might know the chap wouldn't keep decent hours." With great presence of mind, Dr. Yellon called up the shaft.

"The noight watchman, sor!" he bellowed. Then he shut and locked the elevator door. "Most unfortunate," he said in a worried voice. "He may be down any moment. For that matter, the real night watchman is due here in forty minutes."

Mildred was comforting. "I doubt if he's missed the crate yet. Raymond never notices anything he isn't working on. Probably one of you didn't shut the elevator door to his suite tightly, and he heard a noise down here. Just the same, maybe we'd better flit away."

Jedlicka was not to be robbed of his prey. "If there were only some way we could get the crate out of here for a few hours," he lamented. We stared at it—a half-ton block of material on a rolling platform. It would be one thing for our combined strength to push it outdoors along the ramp. But what then? We could hardly propel it along the streets of Cambridge without causing untoward comment.

"There's a steam roller up the street a bit—" I began.

"Yes," Dr. Yellon said instantly, "yes. I'll get it. It may take a few moments to get the steam up, so in the meantime, Stoddard, take the rope from that box of statuary and fix it to this platform. We'll tie the other end to the steam roller and —presto!—away we go!"

Forsyth quavered, "A steam roller! Really, the contraption makes a noise to wake the dead."

"Of course." Yellon was impatient. "That's just the point. No one ever questions a steam roller, though one may curse it." He paused, and I could fairly hear his brain sizzling. "Wake the dead," he repeated. "Now, there's a splendid idea, Forsyth. There's a night shift working on the water mains over by the North Cemetery—working very noisily too. We can take this crate to the cemetery and examine it at our leisure. With such a racket going on, a little more won't be noticed. Thank you, Forsyth."

FORSYTH smiled palely but proudly. In a short time we were racketing and whistling along the streets, with Yellon in the driver's seat of the steam roller. The rest of them preceded us in more conventional vehicles, carrying the implements and one of our field floodlights with its portable battery. Dr. Dana also found room for a bottle of sherry which had mysteriously appeared from somewhere. The crate trailed behind us on its platform. Yellon had insisted that I ride with him and Mildred. The seat was narrow, so she perforce had to sit on my lap, my arms encircling her waist. I did not find the position uncomfortable. The ride was amazingly short.

Yellon was right. Riveting and drilling were going on in the street near the cemetery, so the noise our steam roller made was small in comparison. We drove just inside the gates and halted. Our other colleagues joined us, moving with swift deft steps from the darkness. All, that is, except Dr. Cartier (ethnography), who stumbled over a spade and fell headlong into an adjacent excavation.

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he exclaimed passionately as we helped him from the pit. "I shall enter a complaint! Moreover," he added, rubbing his ankle, "no true workman leaves his tools thus exposed to the elements."

First, a suitable spot must be found for our chiseling. (I use the word, of course, in its scientific connotation.) Then the others set about unpacking the necessary tools and floodlights. It was the sort of busy little scene that I enjoy, and it carried about it some of the keen flavor of a field expedition. This peaceful industry was shattered long before it was in stride. From a far point in the cemetery a figure suddenly came leaping and dodging toward us.

"Manstead," Yellon pronounced. We had hardly assimilated this fact when from behind still another knoll appeared three more stalwart figures. They hesitated a moment on sighting Manstead, then set out after him in full cry.

"And the police," Yellon added calmly, and melted into the night. Eight seconds later, none of our group was left in the cemetery with the exception of Mildred and me. We slipped into the shadows of some dense bushes by the wall, and so had the undiluted pleasure of watching the following events:

"Stop! Thieves! Robbers!" Dr. Manstead was shouting, and his speed was like the wind as he saw our group vanishing before his vengeful eyes. Undoubtedly his balance would have been better if he had not been carrying a bulky object under his arm. Moreover, his eyes were fixed on the gate through which Jedlicka had just skipped. So disaster overtook Manstead. He stumbled on the mound of dirt beside the open pit, and with a soaring leap that had about it something of a ballerina's grace, he rose in the air and then disappeared. The object beneath his arm soared also, but away from him. It flew straight up—for an instant we could glimpse it in the glow of the portable floodlight—then it also fell into the excavation. From a further muffled curse, I gathered that the missile may have struck its owner a glancing blow.

MILDRED pinched my arm. "The skull! He has the skull with him!" she whispered. Manstead must have discovered that someone had been tampering with the vault combination, and so had removed his precious find. But I was more interested in immediate events. For now a powerful torch illumined the scene, giving it some aspects of a Doré version of Hell. Around the pit the policemen gamboled like outsize imps, pulling, poking, and thrusting at Manstead. Of the latter, little was visible except his bald pate.

"Grab him, Mike!"

"I'll get him, sor."

Now two of the men had reached the edge of the pit and leaned down to grip Manstead. They started hauling him into view. He was a sorry-looking object, covered with fresh loam, and he struggled against their clutches. "My skull, my skull!" he cried, plunged into the pit again, and then came up, clasping the skull. An astonished silence greeted his words.

"Grave-robbing and admits it," one of the men commented at last with admirable restraint. "Well, leave him keep it. It's evidence."

"Sure, John, you wouldn't be letting him carry some poor soul's head away, even to the station? 'Twouldn't be reverint."

"Nonsense!" Dr. Manstead said with decision. "You have the whole matter twisted, my good fellows. Let go my arm." His voice shook with anger. "Why, I called headquarters myself."

"What's your name?"

"I didn't give it over the telephone, but I'm Dr. Raymond Manstead—"

In the year 503 Laborers' wages were frozen at two cents a day in Constantinople, Turkey. The freeze was finally thawed out by official proclamation in 1903, 1,400 years later!—*Louis Hirsch.*

"A doctor, eh? Trying your dirty grave-robbing tricks in the city of Cambridge!" One of them grabbed Manstead and shook him in righteous indignation. Manstead completely lost his temper now.

"I tell you it's my *own* skull!" he squealed. "Catch the others and stop arguing with me! Oh, you imbeciles, you moronic spawn!"

A hand was clapped over his mouth. "No filthy talk now. Take him to the car, Mike." And Manstead was dragged away, well gagged by a large Hibernian hand. The remaining two officers stared solemnly about them, and one of them commented, "A fine large monument it must be, to be needing a steam roller to drag it in. Well, let's be looking over the grounds."

It seemed advisable at this moment for Mildred and me to remove ourselves, so we slid over the low stone wall and walked rapidly away. An incurious taxi driver picked us up and deposited us at the museum, where we found the rest of the group gathered in Yellon's suite. Their faces were unhappy. Even the news that Manstead had been carted off to the police station did not cheer them.

"He'll talk himself out of it and drag us in," Yellon was beginning, when the telephone rang. His face brightened during the conversation, and he turned to us again happily. "Gentlemen," he said, "and Mildred, of course—let us proceed to the police station." But he would not divulge his little scheme until we had gathered around the sergeant's desk. Dr. Manstead was sitting between two officers, looking extremely sulky.

"Did it need the whole department to identify me?" he began, but Dr. Yellon raised his hand for silence.

"Yes, indeed, sergeant," he said, "this is certainly Dr. Raymond Manstead, a guest of the university. I vouch for his identity, as do these others."

"That's all very well," the sergeant said sourly. "Fact remains, this man was caught robbing a grave."

Yellon looked at Manstead with a pained expression. "I can hardly believe this, doctor. I'd be glad to hear your side of the matter."

"*All* of it?" Manstead burst out venomously. Then, as he saw our noncommittal faces, his voice wavered. "Let bygones be bygones," he muttered. "Please tell the sergeant that the skull in my possession is prehistoric, that it never saw a Cambridge cemetery before tonight. That it is, in fact, *Homo Mansteadiensis*—the greatest anthropological find in generations!"

"Come, come, Manstead," Yellon said reprovingly, "I can scarcely believe that you'd carry such a priceless article about so carelessly. Surely you have an adequate vault in your laboratory?"

Manstead glared. "I wonder. Stop beating about the bush and tell the sergeant that the skull positively did not come from the cemetery."

YELLON gazed at the ceiling and his tone was regretful. "My dear fellow, how can I testify honestly to such a matter? I have never seen the skull." He glanced around. "Have any of the rest of you seen it?" There was a small but pregnant silence. "The honor of a great university is at stake, Dr. Manstead. Much as we would like to oblige a colleague, we must move cautiously when it comes to a matter involving science."

"Then what's all the talk about?" the sergeant asked impatiently. "Just take a look at the skull, Dr. Yellon. I know you and I know your reputation. Now tell me. Did this come fresh from the cemetery tonight or not?" He reached down to a shelf beneath his desk. Manstead gave the anguished cry of a mother robin who sees her nest menaced by prowling skunks, and his upraised arm halted the sergeant.

"Is this fair or right? Jedlicka—Dana?" He looked from one to the other of us desperately and actually wrung his hands. "It was understood that none of you was to see *Homo Mansteadiensis* until such time as was convenient. It was a gentleman's agreement."

"I find the present time most convenient," Yellon said helpfully; and Mildred added, "You and I had a gentleman's agreement too, Raymond. Perhaps you'd rather stay here until your case comes up."

Manstead collapsed suddenly. "Very well, sergeant. Show them the skull." He shot us all a viperous look. "But take these—these *vultures* some place where I can't see them hovering!"

That was a thrilling two hours that we sat around a long table in the basement of the police station, with *Homo Mansteadiensis* propped where all could see and finger him. Reams of paper were covered with measurements and sketches. When we returned to the sergeant's desk, dawn was already breaking.

"Since we can now testify that the skull is prehistoric, that it never was in a Cambridge cemetery, you will release our colleague," Dr. Yellon stated, and signed the necessary papers. "But I suggest that we leave before you bring him out, sergeant. This affair has been a bit humiliating for a proud man and a scholar. Perhaps it would be kinder if we didn't confront him again tonight."

"There's not many as thoughtful as you, sir," the sergeant approved, and Dr. Yellon's smile was modest. In the open air, our group began to scatter. Professor Jedlicka hailed a taxi and drove away, looking as dapper as ever in spite of his eighty-six years, for in his buttonhole was a rose from the cemetery bushes. The others took the two cars, but Yellon and I elected to see Mildred to her hotel, only a walking distance away.

I urged her to breakfast with me, or I was willing to yield on that if she would join me for lunch. But she pointed out that even lunchtime was only eight hours away and that women have a strong biologic urge toward a few hours' sleep every day in the year. Her eyes were drowsy and she leaned against me so trustingly that it suddenly seemed unkind to argue any further. So we compromised on early dinner.

DR. YELLON was in fine fettle as I rejoined him after seeing her into her hotel. "It's possible the steam-roller business may be aired before this matter is finally adjusted," he admitted, "but what care I? My book can go to press next week!"

"Ah, Stoddard, my dear fellow, let this be a lesson to both of us. See how, by low personal greed, poor Manstead defeated his own purposes, forgetting that scientific findings are the property of all humanity. Not," he added hastily, "that I feel it necessary to publicize tonight's research before my book comes out." I agreed with him and, reassured, he went on: "You've the best sketching eye in the group, and I noticed you did several diagrams of the skull. Mind letting me have one?"

I handed them to him, and then was covered with a natural embarrassment. For though there were five excellent sketches of the skull, I had not meant him to see the sixth paper, on which I had drawn the features of Dr. Mildred Dufrater. But it was too late now.

"An accurate appellation, but hardly a scientific one," Dr. Yellon chided me gently. I peered over his shoulder and to my further discomfiture saw that beneath the portrait of Dr. Dufrater I had absent-mindedly penned the caption: "Blondy."

THE END

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LAST CALL FOR WORLD PEACE

Continued from Page 15

In general, people live much as they did in the West about 1840. Politically, however, because of the complete disruption of transportation and communication and the time it has taken to develop new methods, society has retrogressed even further, and the central government exercises little real authority. There is considerable lawlessness and local town councils are concerned primarily with maintaining some order and stability.

THAT picture is imaginative and speculative, yes. But it is a possible and even optimistic picture of what is likely to follow a third world war fought with atomic bombs. Such pessimistic prophecy recalls the horrible predictions of the sort of catastrophe which would follow a second world war. The Sunday supplements in the 1920s, leaning heavily on artists' drawings, depicted the desolation and chaos that would follow such a conflict. The argument generally was that the results of such a war were too horrible for any civilized person to contemplate. Thus it was reasonable to assume that no nation's leaders would permit a second world war.

Compare those predictions with the newsreels you have seen of Aachen, Cologne, and London during the blitz; the hundreds of thousands of displaced persons wandering over Europe; the daily news reports of how difficult it is to get Europe's wrecked transport and production system moving again; of the starvation that is only minimized and not prevented by huge food shipments from North and South America, the only productive continents not ravaged by this war. It is by no means certain yet that we can, in five, ten or twenty years, pull Europe out of the economic chaos left in the wake of a war fought with old-fashioned B-17s, artillery and TNT.

Consider, then, what one atomic bomb did to Hiroshima, a city of 400,000. The city was completely destroyed insofar as performing any productive or service function is concerned. From 75,000 to 100,000 persons were killed and from 30,000 to 50,000 more wounded or burned.

It is entirely possible, and probable, unless some political means is found to prevent it, that within twenty or thirty years every nation which pretends to any stature will have some atomic bombs. And the major and intermediate powers will have thousands of them, probably much more efficient than the already obsolete type dropped on Hiroshima. So far, the only defense against the bomb the scientists can see is quick retaliation that would destroy enemy bases. Once an atomic war began, all the factors would operate to force immediately an all-out contest in destruction.

Actually, the imaginative picture I have drawn of conditions twenty years after such a war is probably overoptimistic. The explosion of hundreds or thousands of atomic bombs within a few days might possibly set up radiations that would obliterate all life over large areas, perhaps whole continents. It might even start that much discussed chain reaction in the earth's crust or atmosphere and turn our planet into a minor sun.

Even if one of those dismal eventualities did not occur, it is entirely possible that our political situation might be even worse after such a war than I have imagined it. It might be replaced by the most ruthless kind of dictatorship, with one five-year plan after another in a desperate attempt to rebuild our industries in preparation for a fourth world war.

Is this the only prospect to which we can look forward? Can civilized man survive the atomic age? Can we find some way of averting the sort of disaster envisaged? Or is modern man, because of his inability to control the destructive forces his own brain has unleashed, headed for extinction?

The public officials, scientists, and political observers who have studied the issue facing us are not very optimistic. History shows that social and political changes in the past have come very slowly. The inertia of society, the resistance to drastic changes in political institutions and philosophies, is tremendous. And it is clear that some very drastic changes in political systems are essential if we are to stand a real chance of averting atomic war. The difficulty is that we only have twenty or thirty years at the most to accomplish such changes. And the time, in the light of history, appears pitifully short.

LET'S take a look at the alternatives before us. As I see it, there are four.

First, we can go on pretty much as we are in the international field, with some sixty-odd individual nations each claiming complete and unlimited sovereignty. This means the right to do exactly as they please, regardless of effect on the rest of the world, mitigated slightly by their obligation to the United Nations Organization. The latter, of course, cannot act in any critical situation except with the unanimous consent of the five permanent members of the Security Council: Russia, Britain, the United States, France, and China. From the conflicts already apparent among these five, it looks pretty hopeless to expect the Security Council to solve any really serious crisis.

Consequently, if this is to be our course, we would have to fall back on the hope that somehow we could achieve a balance of power among the major and intermediate powers. It would have to be so perfect and so apparent that no nation would ever risk starting a war. This is the hope we have relied upon in the past. Realistically, I would say the odds are 10 to 1 against such a course averting an atomic war, even though it seems at present to be the road down which we and the world are drifting. Some trigger-happy aggressor is almost certain to figure the odds are in his favor and push the button that starts World War Three if we follow this course.

A second possibility of averting a third war would be for the United States immediately to announce that it intends to run the world and police it. We would have to be ready to attack with atomic bombs any nation that opposed our program to maintain peace. In other words, we would assume sole responsibility for world order and enforce our will by force. If we were ruthless enough to adopt and carry out such a program, it might work. After all, we do possess the only known facilities for making atomic bombs in the world, and presumably, if determined enough, we could make our decisions stick.

HOWEVER, two facts rule out this alternative. The first is that there is no conceivable possibility of the people of the United States adopting or supporting such a policy. It is contrary to every principle we espouse. The second fact is that the other great powers would not accept such a solution and we'd have to fight them, which would precipitate the very war we are trying to avoid. This alternative not only is a practical impossibility but, like the first course, offers no hope of preventing war.

The third alternative we might try is to establish a limited form of world government. It would be entrusted with the supervision and control of atomic weapons. It also would have authority to act immediately against any nation which violated or attempted to violate its control measures. Such a world government might be set up in one of two ways. The UNO commission to study atomic energy might recommend the creation of a new United Nations agency clothed with special powers to police this particular field and prevent violations of agreed-upon security requirements. Or the members of UNO might join in the creation of a super-state, granting to it certain powers in a restricted field now claimed by individual nations. In either case, the result would be essentially the same. For individual nations would have to surrender or delegate to the international agency very great powers, and relegate national governments to a secondary position in the particular fields in which the world government would function.

For instance, all scientific testimony I have seen agrees that the only possibility of controlling or preventing production of atomic bombs is the rigid inspection of industrial plants. Under such a plan some international agency would have to be given virtually unlimited authority to inspect any and all industrial facilities, whether privately owned or government arsenals. Only by such an inspection power could it hope to detect unauthorized manufacture of atomic weapons. Furthermore, the international agency would have to command an international armed force greater than that of any individual nation. We and other peoples would have to grant the world government authority to compel freedom of inspection by force if any nation refused it, or to stop by use of force any violation of its rules by any nation or individual or corporation.

IF a world government clothed with these tremendous powers could be established, I believe it would stand a fair chance of preventing an atomic war. Clearly, it would carry with it grave dangers—dangers to the very freedoms we are seeking to preserve. Every government, whether local, state, federal, or eventually world government, is composed of individual human beings. We know from experience that it is a rare individual who when granted power will not expand that power to the limit. And devising checks and balances to guard against usurpation of power in a world government would be a terrifically difficult task.

But that is only one of many equally difficult problems which would have to be solved before an effective world government could be established. This war, like all others, has left a resurgence of nationalism all over the world. The Dutch are more Dutch, the French more French, and we are more American than before. This nationalism stands squarely in the path of world citizenship and would have to be overcome as a first step.

We and the people of the other democracies would never consent to granting such vast powers to a world government unless it were organized on a democratic basis. We would want basic rights guaranteed to individuals and protected by courts, and with a parliament freely chosen by the people as the guardian of these liberties. Would Russia and Yugoslavia, with their people permitted to vote only for or against a single slate of candidates named by a small minority, ever agree to such a drastic change in their whole political system? I'm inclined to doubt it, although I believe it would be worth while to put it up to them.

Another problem would be finding men and women capable of discharging the vast responsibilities of running a world government. President Truman has said that one of his most difficult problems is getting enough experienced and top-notch

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people to fill important government positions. How much tougher it would be to find people who could function effectively in a much vaster and more complicated world government!

Finally, do we have time in the next twenty or thirty years to overcome all these obstacles? For instance, could the necessary two thirds or three fourths of the American people be convinced that the risks of this alternative are worth taking to avoid war? No one knows the answer. We can find it only by trying. Despite its risks, world government does appear to offer us and the world the best chance of averting an atomic world war.

The fourth and final alternative would be to form a federal union with the nations in the British Commonwealth, Holland, Belgium, France, the Scandinavian countries and all other nations with political philosophies and systems substantially the same as our own. The government of such a union could, because of the common background of the peoples in it and their experience in democratic government, be granted even greater powers than a world government. It could even cover such fields as commerce, money, and immigration, as well as a monopoly on atomic power and a common foreign policy. Other nations could be accepted into such a union as they showed willingness to accept its constitution and bill of rights and adopt its system of government.

Such a nuclear world government is proposed by Federal Union, headed by Clarence Streit and including many distinguished members, such as Owen Roberts, former Associate Justice of our Supreme Court. Many of the obstacles to a world government would be minimized or eliminated in such a union. And it is possible that it would, for many decades at least, have such a tremendous preponderance of actual military power that it could effectively prevent any aggression, certainly against any of its members.

The same danger of abuse of great concentrated power would exist. But to my mind this would be lessened because of the experience of the peoples involved in guarding their individual rights and freedoms against excessive power, whether in the hands of government or of private agencies or individuals.

The greatest drawback to such a course, however, would be the danger that it would provoke a counter-alliance among the nations that were not included and, because of the suspicions and antagonisms aroused, set the stage for a greater world war between two titans.

On the whole, this presents a pretty pessimistic picture of civilized man's chances to avert his own destruction. Although I am naturally an optimistic person, that is the way it adds up to me.

MY own personal political position is that it is to our best interest to support the third alternative—world government. The UNO atomic energy commission should be able to report to us within a year or so the absolute minimum international controls needed to give us a fighting chance to avert an atomic war. I think the United States should support such controls, accepting the limited world government they will mean. I recognize that sentiment in Congress now would be overwhelmingly against such a limitation and delegation of national sovereignty. I am confident there would be much greater support for it among the American people. Whether that support would grow sufficiently so that the necessary amendments to our

COLONEL STOOPNAGLE'S FICTIONARY

PRAM-ITIVE: Stone Age baby carriage.

PED AGOG: A teacher aghast.

STEWED-IO: A salo(o)n.

MILLINAIRY: Headgear for flying.

TARGAT: Bull's-eye for a machine gun.

BWROTH: Petulant purée.

EDIFISH: Aquarium building.

OURGUMENT: When you and I differ.

MISS NOMER: Mrs. Malaprop's maiden name.

JIRK: A jerk who irks.

Constitution could be adopted, only time can tell.

But if any major power refuses to go along on the absolute minimum world government set-up, then I believe the United States should adopt the fourth alternative and seek immediately a federal union with those democratic nations which will go along. A preponderance of world power lodged in a federal union of the democratic peoples offers our next best hope of averting an atomic war.

Perhaps I have been too pessimistic about the possibilities of adopting these hopeful alternatives. In the war criminal trials now in progress at Nuremberg, the United States, Russia, France, and Britain have joined in establishing an entirely new precedent in international law: the proposition that individuals in a nation, even its officials, are responsible legally to a higher authority than any national tribunal; that even when under orders they commit acts violating international law or outraging human decency, they can be held to account by the community of nations and peoples.

That is so radical I doubt if its implications have been grasped.

From the Nuremberg trials to world government may be a shorter step than many of us can now foresee. Perhaps civilized man is already on the way to solving the problem of the atomic bomb.

THE END

THE GILDED EASTER LILY

Continued from Page 17

few hundred dollars could be snowballed to a fortune. At present prices it may cost as high as $9,000 to plant an acre of bulblets—one acre of land at $1,000, 80,000 bulblets for $8,000.

Greenhorns have discovered, too, that growing lilies is as full of pitfalls as a steeplechase. A water-logged field, a frost in April, or a long dry spell can ruin a promising crop. Moles or pocket gophers can burrow away the profits. Unwise selection of bulblets or growing site can result in a rundown stock, and any one of a half dozen miseries from beetles to scale tip rot and botrytis blight can attack the lily patch unless the grower is on the ground to protect it.

Even if he steers clear of these misfortunes, the cultivation of bulbs for the Easter lily market demands extreme skill and foresight. Bulblets are planted in October in furrows three or four inches deep. By the next autumn they're yearlings with their own crop of bulblets. Dug and separated—a ticklish operation if the bulbs are not to be injured—the bulblets are left to rest for a few weeks in a cool, dry packing shed. Then back they go into the ground, this time in deeper furrows—a tedious, down-on-your-hands-and-knees, backaching process. There are problems of fertilizing and of cover crops, and, with the spring, the job of weeding. Unless a grower and his family can handle the work themselves, wages (now up to $1.50 an hour) can eat into the profits.

In June the fields will be a glacier of white blossoms. All that satin white beauty goes into the compost pile. Growers aren't interested in blossoms. They're only after bulbs, so the flowers are cut in the fields and the bulbs left for a time in the ground. In September, approximately two years from the time the bulblets were planted, they're harvested as adult bulbs and are ready for the market, unless the grower is interested in raising jumbos, in which case they still have another year's growth ahead of them. Adult bulbs are "commercials" and are graded according to size, packed in peat moss and shipped to Eastern florists. Sizes refer to the circumference of the bulb and generally range from seven to eleven or twelve inches. The bigger the bulb, the higher the price the florists pay.

After Easter a lily is not worth the pot it grows in. It's truly a lily of a day and a florist gambles perhaps as much as $500,000 that he can bring his lilies out strong and white for Easter morning. If the florist's timing is right, each potted plant will bring him from $2.50 to $7, depending on the number of blossoms.

In Curry County, a flourishing crop of tall stories is growing up with the lilies. One favorite is the yarn of a man who visited the restaurant at Brookings. When it came time to pay for his steak dinner, he pulled two Croft lily bulbs from his pocket and slammed them down on the counter. Unconcerned, the waitress gave him four bulblets change.

Mrs. Gertrude Cole's experience is typical of the get-rich-quick bulb business. She eked out a living with two cows and half a dozen tourist cabins along the coast highway. Left with three acres of yearling bulbs on her hands in 1941, when her nephew was inducted into the Army, Mrs. Cole hung a "no vacancy" sign on her cabins and spent all her time in the lily fields. By autumn her empty cabins were piled high with bulbs and bulblets. "Last year," she says, "I turned in for income tax thirty one thousand five hundred dollars."

The majority of substantial growers say they'll even welcome the day when the bulb boom is over and lily growing gets down to earth again. They fear the present inflated prices will destroy the long-range market for Northwestern lilies. They expect to be faced before long with a competitive market. The part the Japanese lily will play in the future is unknown. Mexico has large plantings and its stock is increasing. Domestic lily stock also is increasing rapidly. Before many years it will be a question of every bulb for itself and may the best bulb win.

THE END

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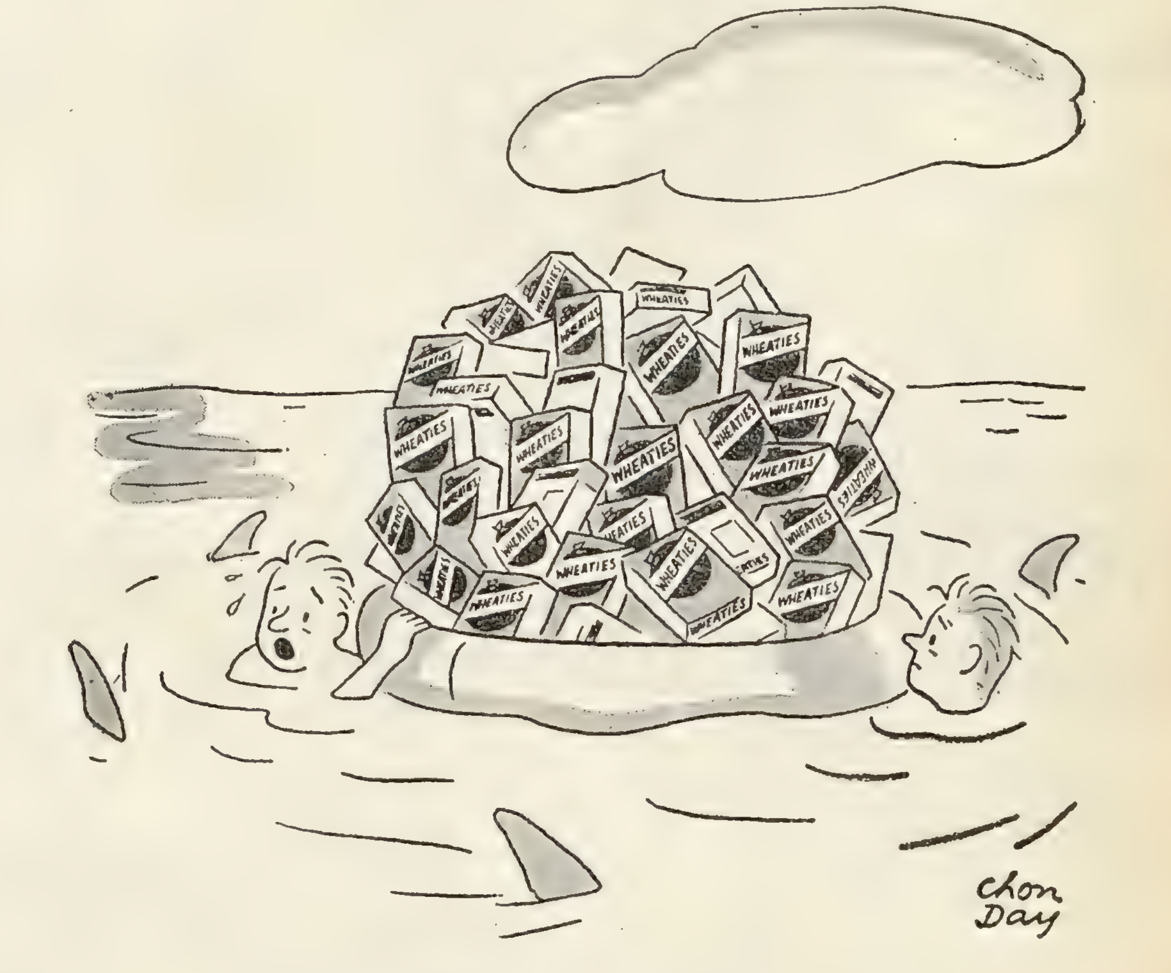

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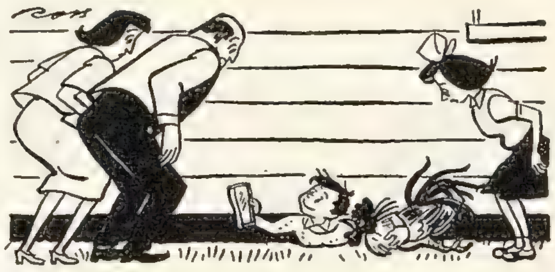
Woman-Talk

BY MARGARET FISHBACK

BEAVER BACON: The Can Manufacturers Institute vouches for the fact that a Michigan family named Beaver has been enjoying twenty-eight-year-old bacon for breakfast. It seems one of the Beaver roosters manuevered his way under the house to enjoy a bit of solitude, and had to be retrieved by one of the Beaver children, who emerged with a tin can along with the bird. The can contained four slabs of bacon in a perfect state of preservation. Mr. B. recalled canning it twenty-eight years ago and storing it under the house.



HATS ON! IT'S EASTER!—A little more than two months ago New York's Fashion Group held a luncheon meeting at the Hotel Biltmore to pick and show the "hats most likely to succeed in 1946." The show indicated that hats will be worn pushed well back, and countless hats will be crownless. Hats have retreated from the brow to give the spotlight to bangs, which have taken New York by storm—curly bangs, straight bangs, fluffy bangs and sleek bangs are doing a fine, flattering job of framing feminine faces and complementing all sorts of hat lines from rollers and bretons to bonnets and derbies. Budget hats made to sell for five dollars or less were shown by several wholesale manufacturers, many of them following the same trend toward open crowns and off-the-face silhouettes.

POP IS HUMAN TOO: The man of the house would like some Easter gifts too, so Momma shouldn't forget him as she lies in wait for *her* spring loot. New York stores are at last getting smart light-weight robes in stock again, good-looking rayons in small prints resembling tie-silk foulards. There are cotton stripes and plaids too. The Men's Fashion Guild of New York promises to assuage the ex-soldier's hunger for color by offering him gay underwear, socks, swimming trunks and Basque shirts. The Guild is sponsoring a gray-and-yellow cotton promotion for spring, which will feature striped shirts, shorts, and trunks, along with harmonizing socks. Gray socks are to have yellow clocks; yellow socks, gray clocks. Dress Poppa up like a daffodil, and he'll *know* he's a civilian for sure! There are fine fragrant toiletries for men, too, that make highly acceptable Easter gifts. Lilac Vegetal After-Shave Lotion is being offered in a double-header package by Pinaud to introduce a new talc with a matching scent. It will be priced for a limited time at $1 plus tax. Especially attractive are Lentheric's "Tanbark" after-shave lotion, powder, and cologne. The 4-ounce pinch bottle of cologne is 80 cents plus tax; the 8-ounce decanter bottle, $4 plus tax. Proof that men don't think it sissified to smell good lies in the fact that they spend more than $25,000,000 a year on toiletries, *not* including shaving creams and soaps.

ATTENTION, WEATHERMAN!

A waiting world regards with pain
The possibility of rain
On Easter Day, for April showers
Aren't good for millinery flowers.

BUSTLES OF SPRING: The rustle of spring is accompanied by bustles this spring, and peplums and jabots and boleros and leg-o'-mutton sleeves, not to mention the rustle of taffeta. All were very much in the limelight at a spring fashion show given for the press at Macy's. Full, rounded hemlines, loosely swinging coats, and even padded *hip*lines contributed to a well-rounded picture of soft femininity. A satin bustle on a dramatic high-necked black crepe dress with leg-o'-mutton sleeves constituted a bouquet aimed at two stage successes, Bloomer Girl and Carousel. More wearable and flattering to the average figure was a soft navy wool, whose full rippling skirt and red leather belt made it a dress that could go to the office and on to a cocktail party with equal poise and charm. A dark brown afternoon dress with a wide, low neckline and lots of skirt was handsomely topped off by a brown hat laden with tawny roses.

BIG-TIME OPERATION

Continued from Page 33

periphery of the group so that he could still watch for O'Dowd. Only vaguely did he become aware that the conversation was assuming the staccato tempo of argument. For years these men had fought one another, argued, cursed, and complained, as if the responsibility for the ghastly interruption in their lives could be touched with a finger or called to account with a bitter word. Abruptly Abbot's interest came alive. The argument was over the question of whether or not there would be a complete examination of their belongings and equipment on debarkation to check up on black-market speculation and illicit sales. He saw Sheriff's concerned face as he argued that there would be no such inspection; and Abbot perceived that Sheriff was arguing, not from conviction, but from wish. Sheriff feared an examination.

The answer suddenly burst on Abbot. Sheriff, everyone, had something which couldn't stand inspection! They must all be in the same boat together with him. In the past couple of weeks Abbot had come to feel that he was no longer in the Army because the Army's mood had passed beyond his reach: everyone else was going home free and clear. But now he was no longer alone. There were others, even Sheriff, who were bedeviled by their own sense of guilt.

Abbot suddenly felt like laughing aloud. It was such a damn good joke. Just by listening to them argue he could tell that every one of them was as scared as he was.

ABBOT walked over to Sheriff and touched his arm.

"Hey, Sherry," he whispered. "Come over here for a minute. I want to talk to you." He made his voice gentle and understanding because he was now fiercely anxious to exchange confessions.

Sheriff was reluctant to leave because the argument was too important to him, but Abbot was insistent, and he led his friend out of the crowd. He had to pick a spot not too near any of the M.P.s, yet out of earshot of the soldiers, and at the same time he had to keep his eyes on the staircase.

"O.K. Spill it," said Abbot. "Nobody'll hear us here. What have you got?"

Sheriff looked at him suspiciously.

"What makes you think I have anything?" he demanded. "What's up?"

"Cut it out," said Abbot. "Don't you think I know you well enough to tell?"

Sheriff looked searchingly into his face, and then turned away. "It's not much," he said, and sounded very guilty. "It's something of Levitan's." His voice slid over the name. "I took them from his stuff. You remember—he got them from that captain in Dover. I—I just didn't get around to telling you that I took them myself."

"Took what?" Abbot persisted impatiently.

"Those field glasses."

"Field glasses!" said Abbot slowly, as though the very mention of something so trivial was degrading. "Field glasses!"

"You know," Sheriff continued, without noticing Abbot's tone. "They're R.A.F. issue. If anyone should ask me, I got no right to be walking around with British issue glasses for officers," he added miserably. "I don't want any trouble at this point. I want to get home. The wife is sick and I'm up to my ears in debt."

"Field glasses!" Abbot said. He was so angry he could have hit Sheriff. "You dope! A lousy pair of field glasses! Throw them away, give the damn things away!"

"You're not sore?" Sheriff asked. "You're not sore because I didn't say anything?"

"Why should I be sore?" Abbot demanded bitterly. He was back to where he had been in the first place: entirely alone. And then, because it would relieve Sheriff, he lied, "I knew all along you had them."

"You did?" Sheriff seemed cheered. "I can't tell you how lousy I felt. Say," he added suddenly. "You never did say how you made out in that crap game with O'Dowd."

Abbot found Sheriff unbearable. "I won six hundred thousand bucks," said Abbot with the restrained contempt, the careful enunciation of a profound and biting insult. He would have continued twisting his bitter disappointment into Sheriff's bewildered face, but O'Dowd was coming down the steps. Abbot left Sheriff without another word.

O'DOWD had paused uncertainly at the foot of the staircase, just long enough for Abbot to reach him. The big soldier had a glassy look of shock.

But as Abbot looked at him, O'Dowd's eyes slowly cleared and his jaw relaxed. For that instant Abbot could see right through O'Dowd and identify himself completely with his mind. With the quickened perception of imminent threat which is the sum of all the senses of the hunted, Abbot knew that the chaplain had found O'Dowd absurdly transparent.

"You told him!" said Abbot swiftly. "Damn you, you told him!"

O'Dowd pulled himself away and hesitated. "What do you take me for?" he said slowly, but Abbot knew he was lying.

"I never saw a guy like you for worrying," said O'Dowd. "Can't a guy talk over old times with someone without you beginning to sweat?"

"Sweat?" said Abbot. "There's plenty to sweat about. Listen. I don't want any part of this. This isn't my

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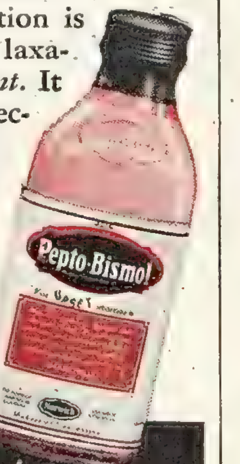

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A Norwich Product Norwich

Pepto-Bismol

for UPSET *Stomach*

racket. I'm a musician, damn you! Look, O'Dowd," he went on quickly. "For the last time, let's duck out of this, let's come clean. We'll do it together."

O'Dowd moved his arm as if to protect himself. "No," he said. "No, I won't. Don't you start that with me too."

"What do you mean, me too? Who else is there?" Abbot asked slowly.

"Nobody, and don't try being smart with me. I didn't talk to nobody, and I'm not going to. The same goes for you." He took a tight grip on Abbot's arm. "If I ever catch you trying to duck out on me, I'll—" His eyes slid sideways to look for the nearest M.P. and his voice became a whisper. "Don't cross me, Abbot, that's all. I can hold out only so long." He paused and got himself under control. "And another thing," he said, as he forced the tight rancor from his voice. "You took a grand from me in that game. I want it back. I'm taking it now. Fork over. I'm not going to beat my brains out for you for nothing." He was talking now in his ordinary grumble as he pulled Abbot over to the bulkhead. They stood with their backs to the men so that they could transfer the money. "After all," said O'Dowd, "every cent of that dough really belongs to me."

"I don't care who it belongs to," said Abbot. "I want to know what you told that chaplain. I want to—"

But O'Dowd interrupted him roughly. "Forget it. I told you once that we talked about nothing. If we can't trust each other, it's too damn bad!" He snatched the money from Abbot, put it in his pocket and patted it. He nudged Abbot with his elbow. He was alive again. "Take it easy, kid, you'll last longer."

Abbot watched him, and a phrase repeated itself in his mind: "He's framed me. He's framed me." He looked about slowly, and everywhere were the signs of confinement, of fixed boundaries which hemmed him in. There was no place to run and no place to hide.

NOR was there any escaping from O'Dowd. Even at night, when dreams were so vivid that he thought he hadn't slept at all, it seemed to him that O'Dowd was constantly pushing him back into a stone cave, while on the outside Agnes and his mother were trying to get O'Dowd away.

In the dream, Agnes looked just as she had on the night when she met his mother the first time.

Dressed in his best clothes, he had opened the door of the apartment for her. She seemed shy and yet her eyes were smiling. She seemed to be asking, "Do I look all right? Will she like me?" At that moment he loved her more than ever.

His mother, with an apron over her good dress, came out of the kitchen and she met them in the passage. She smiled. "Hello, Agnes," she said, and then Agnes blushed suddenly. When Abbot saw that his mother and the girl liked each other, he felt a sweetly vibrant relief. For that one happy time he didn't worry about his music—some day there would be a solution to match the perfection of this one.

In one glorious stretch of only a few hours Abbot had had the promise of everything for which he had hoped. Now it was suddenly over. All of his hopes and ambitions now evaporated before the immediate possibility of gray sterile years in the penitentiary. He was rigid with anger and shame. O'Dowd had framed him. Abbot knew it.

WIDE awake now, he stood alone in the darkness and rubbed his hands together as he gazed about him, wondering who was watching him, who was making preparations to catch him in the confined spaces of the ship. There must be a way out, he thought; it can't be only a question of running. With sudden decision, he took his money from his clothes. If he could get rid of it, he could then deny whatever O'Dowd had said and no one could prove anything. He looked about at the tiers of sleeping men, and for reassurance he went down the line to where Sheriff slept.

A burst of affection, of desire for understanding, made him reach quietly for Sheriff's arm. He hesitated before touching the sleeping soldier, then on an impulse he put his hand into Sheriff's bag until he felt the field glasses which had belonged to Levitan. He withdrew the glasses. He unscrewed one of the large lenses. Taking the money out of his pocket hastily, he put it all into the barrel and screwed the lens back in place. A sudden warm gush of relief told him that this made far more sense than throwing the money away. No matter what happened from this point onward, he would have taken care of his friend. He put the glasses back into the bag and returned to his own bunk. He was awake very early the following morning, and yet, as early as it was, he saw no sign of O'Dowd. His bunk hadn't even been slept in.

Abbot hunted through all the possible places where O'Dowd might be found. The soldier was nowhere in that part of the ship reserved for the enlisted men. Several times Abbot walked past the foot of the staircase which led to the chaplain's office in the officers' section.

In spite of his conviction that O'Dowd was with the chaplain, Abbot mechanically went on with his fruitless search, moving about like a man hurrying from appointment to appointment, and all the time he knew that he had no place to go. At any moment the storm would break upon him. He could do nothing but rehearse denials in his mind. He continued to reassure himself that he was safe now: he didn't have the money.

Then, in a frightening flash, it suddenly occurred to him that Sheriff might be searched. Abbot condemned himself for his stupidity in implicating his friend. He hurried down to the hold where the bunks were.

There were only a few men about, and Abbot went directly to Sheriff's bunk. When he was sure that he was unobserved, he made a hurried search of the bag. His frantic haste could find no field glasses at first, but they were in a new position at the bottom of the bag. He pulled them out for examination.

The money was gone. He was too late. He looked up stupidly and then saw that an M.P. was standing down the line by his own bunk, looking at him.

"You," said the M.P. "What's your name?"

Abbot wet his lips slowly. "Sheriff," he said carefully.

"Know a guy named Abbot?"

Abbot shook his head because he had no voice except one which escaped him to ask, "Why?"

The M.P. disregarded the question. "Listen. He sleeps in this bunk here. Do you know what he looks like?"

"There are five hundred guys aboard," said Abbot. "How should I know him?" He slipped the glasses back into the bag before the guard might notice them, and then slung the bag back. He intended to walk away after that, but again that dull voice which he couldn't control slipped away from him. "What do you want him for?"

The M.P.'s eyes were questioning in his turn. "He's my brother-in-law," said the M.P. "I miss him, that's all."

Abbot turned away and walked to the door. It had started. They were after him.

He came out on deck almost face to face with Sheriff. For a moment they both stared at each other.

All the warm feeling which Abbot had felt the night before had left him.

"What did you do about Levitan's glasses?" he asked.

"I threw them away," said Sheriff. "I heaved them out of a porthole." He said it without a trace of guile, and if Abbot hadn't seen the glasses himself, there would have been no reason to doubt the statement.

"Did anyone see you?" Abbot asked.

"Nobody."

SHERIFF had the money on him. At this very minute he was probably holding it in one of his pocketed hands. Abbot knew what his friend was going through. He knew it with the special insight which guilty men possess for sensing identical guilts in others. Instead of the money being a relief to Sheriff, the gift had the reverse effect. Abbot felt apologetic—he had done something even more purposeless than all of his other ridiculous acts. He was spreading a contagion. If Sheriff would only talk to him, everything could be easier, but Sheriff's face was hard and suspicious.

"One thing more," said Sheriff. "Keep the hell out of my bag. I don't like people going through it."

Abbot's mouth fell open. "What do you mean?"

"You've been going through my stuff," said Sheriff shortly. "You admitted as much when you said you knew all along I had the glasses. How else could you know? The next time you want to know about something, ask me direct."

Abbot could see that Sheriff was about to burst into a quarrel. "Sure, Sherry," he said. "I'm sorry."

"O.K. If you don't do it, you don't have anything to be sorry for, so don't be sorry." Sheriff was bitterly pugnacious.

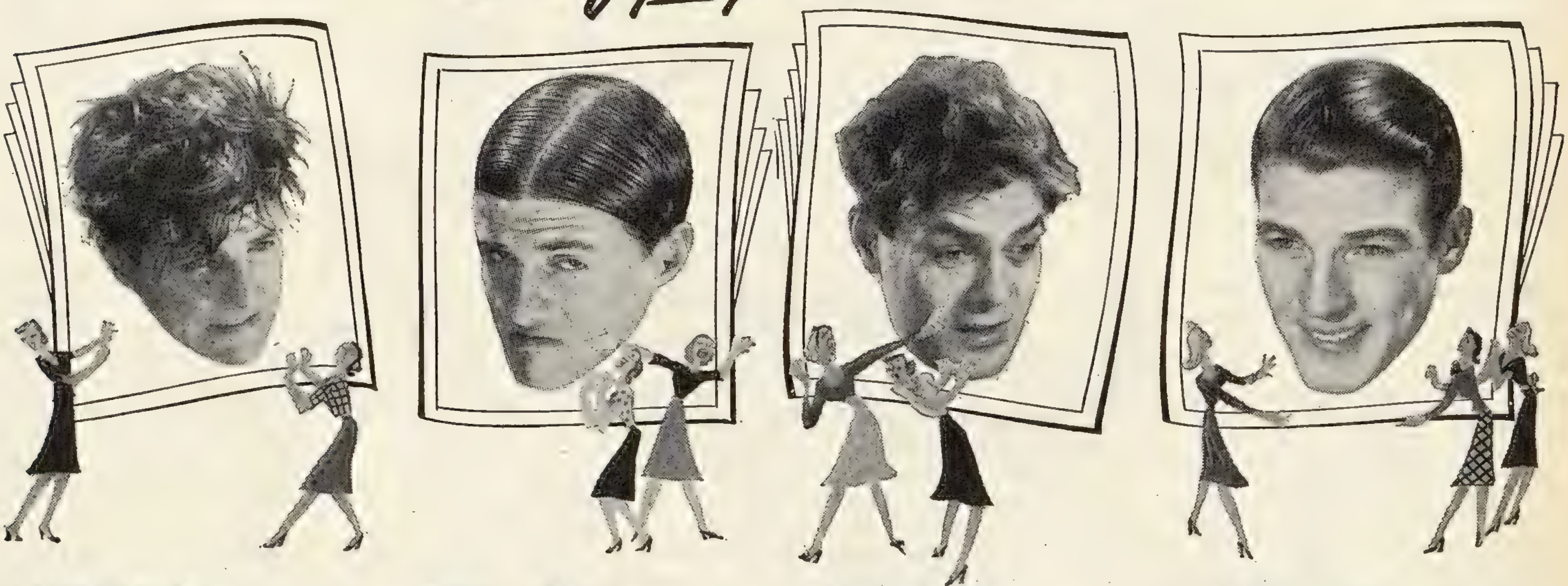
Abbot knew exactly to the last nuance what Sheriff was feeling, and he was powerless to help him. He knew that Sheriff was miserably sorry he had spoken that way, and yet he couldn't take anything back. Abbot touched Sheriff on the arm. He even tried to smile, but there was no time to hang around. He had never before in his life felt this hurrying sense of urgency, as strong as a hunger.

"It's O.K., Sherry. I'll see you later. Relax."

He left Sheriff and kept on walking, pushing his way through the jam, up the narrow catwalk over the cargo hatch, and then down behind the gray wind scoop to the

THE LADIES KNOW WHAT'S WHAT, ASK THEM ABOUT YOUR HAIR

See if you pass the Test!



LADIES SPURN wild, unruly hair. This man found combing his hair with water simply didn't keep it in place. Kreml is famous to keep stubborn hair neatly in place all day long!

LADIES LAUGH at a man who plasters his hair down with grease. How out-dated and silly he looks! Kreml keeps hair looking *so handsome—so* lustrous yet *so masculine.*

LADIES RECOIL from a man whose shoulders are littered with unsightly dandruff flakes. Kreml Hair Tonic promptly relieves itching of dry scalp—it removes loose dandruff.

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narrow platform directly above the propeller. He sat huddling himself up against the coaming of a tall hatch. He bunched himself into the smallest possible position and tried to keep his mind a blank against the boiling shame and degradation that a musician, a good musician who had a key to magic, should have to hide. He was tight with fury.

Of all the possible fates he had ever seen for himself in past day-dreams or fears, this predicament was one which had never occurred to him. It was the greatest cheat in the world. It was like dying young.

A CLATTER of footsteps on the iron stairs made him spin around, and he saw Sheriff.

"I've been looking all over for you," said Sheriff. "How long have you been here?"

"I don't know," said Abbot. He looked away and lit a cigarette. Sheriff sat down next to him.

"Well, say it," said Sheriff bitterly. "Get it off your chest."

"There's nothing on my chest."

"Don't kid me. You knew all about the dough that Levitan had saved up and hid in his glasses, but I swear, so help me, I didn't know about it until today. I never looked through the damn things since I had them. But just when I was getting ready to chuck them away, I decided to see how good they were. That's when I found the dough." He was silent for a moment. "A funny thing happened to me when I got the roll in my hands."

"I know. You couldn't let go," said Abbot. He spoke as though he were remembering an experience which had happened very long ago.

"Just holding it made it mine, and for a while I kidded myself into believing it. But what the hell—we know that Levitan maybe wasn't the greatest guy in the world, but we know what he did, and so it's been hard even to talk about him." Sheriff's statement was slow and simple, yet the depths from which the thought came gave the words the force of explosive relief. "What's the sense of crying inside because he got killed, if you can turn around and steal the dough he meant for his family? Well, I'm over it. I give you my word that his wife and kid get the money as soon as I get in."

"Sure," said Abbot. "I never figured it any other way."

Sheriff nudged his arm. "You're a liar! You thought I was a heel. Don't you think I know why you've been acting the way you have? Come on, don't be sore." He was pleading for Abbot to turn, yet Abbot couldn't look at him because he was trying desperately to remain in a tiny core of isolation. To allow himself to be touched by Sheriff's plea would mean a return to the frightful inescapable present.

"I was never sore," said Abbot, but his throat felt thick, and he envied Sheriff's happiness and relief. He was glad that Levitan's wife would get the money. Abbot knew that he would always have a hard time facing the woman simply because her husband was dead and he had come back, even though that was no one's fault. It was much better that she get whatever money there was. Very much better.

Then he saw the white helmet above them. It was the M.P. who had spoken to him down at the bunks, and he stared questioningly at the two soldiers. He stood on the edge of the catwalk blocking the only means of escape.

"Hey, you're not supposed to be back here. This is out of bounds. Get up." The M.P. looked at Abbot and grinned. "Well, Sheriff, I'm still looking for my brother-in-law. Have you seen him?"

Sheriff spoke up impulsively.

"I'm Sheriff, mac."

Abbot and the M.P. suddenly exchanged glances. The guard's smile faded. Abbot slowly got to his feet.

"O.K., I'm Abbot," he said wearily. He had always known that this was as far as he could run. "Let's go."

THE door was opened to the M.P.'s knock and the man who opened the door was the young lieutenant. At the same moment Abbot saw O'Dowd and the major. Major Christisazza's heavy face was impassive. O'Dowd was pale, yet his eyes looked feverish.

"At ease," said Lieutenant Carter. He walked away a step or two, and then turned as he said in his pleasant voice, the voice still without the edge of accusation. "Abbot, there's the matter of some ten trucks. You remember?" And as the lieutenant asked the last question, there was an echo of cold harshness.

Abbot would have liked to rest for a moment before answering. His heart was beating wildly, his throat was constricted.

"Yes, sir, I remember."

"Private O'Dowd," Carter went on, "has already admitted what happened."

"He *confessed,*" put in the major, stressing the word, and Abbot turned to look at him because the priest's voice was surprisingly soft.

Carter nodded as though he had been corrected. "Quite right, major. O'Dowd made his confession to the chaplain, and the chaplain then urged him to admit the facts himself." He looked straight at Abbot again. "Suppose you tell us what happened when you and O'Dowd were assigned to those trucks."

Abbot opened his lips, but he had no words.

"It's all right, kid," O'Dowd said. His eyes were averted. "I already told them you were in the clear."

"O'Dowd!" The chaplain had another voice, this one hard as metal.

"Yes, father," said O'Dowd. "I just wanted him to know."

The lieutenant broke the silence. "Go on, Abbot. No one has accused you of selling those trucks."

Abbot's head jerked up. It was a trap. An approach he hadn't expected. They were leading him along gently. But there was still nothing he could deny. He decided to go very cautiously, tell as much of the truth as possible, but to halt at the crucial question.

"Go on, kid, tell him," said O'Dowd. "Don't be a dope. All I did was to give you some dough for me in case I went crazy and threw mine away in a crap game."

Lieutenant Carter and Major Christisazza exchanged glances.

"Did O'Dowd give you the money?" Carter asked Abbot.

"No, sir," said Abbot.

The lieutenant turned to O'Dowd.

"How much money did you say you gave him to hold for you?"

"About four thousand dollars, sir," O'Dowd said. "Look—"

"How much did he have altogether?" the lieutenant asked Abbot, cutting O'Dowd short.

"I don't know, sir," said Abbot.

"Didn't you see him get the money?"

"No, sir."

"And he didn't ever tell you where he got it?"

"No, sir."

"Look here," said the lieutenant. "If you think that by denying everything you're going to help your friend here by covering for him, forget it. I told you that O'Dowd has already confessed. Now come clean. We're just trying to tie up the loose ends. Didn't he tell you where he got the money?"

"No, sir." Strictly speaking, no, sir; and if the questioning continued along this line, Abbot would be free. There was no trap, nothing at all, except to corroborate O'Dowd's story. Abbot blinked with surprise because this was so different from what he had expected. He was much less sure of his denials now, because something in O'Dowd's expression told Abbot that the lieutenant was speaking the truth.

HE saw the big overgrown soldier in a new light. All along, then, O'Dowd had been as frightened as he himself had been; his big noise, his shouting, his maniacal gambling had been the reverse side of the coin. All along he must have been fighting against the urging of his own sense of guilt and the urging of his confessor. It was clear to Abbot now what O'Dowd had been through, but, for the life of him, he could not understand what was driving O'Dowd to insist that full blame was his alone.

The lieutenant went on: "Tell me, Abbot, are you sure you didn't hear O'Dowd making the deal?"

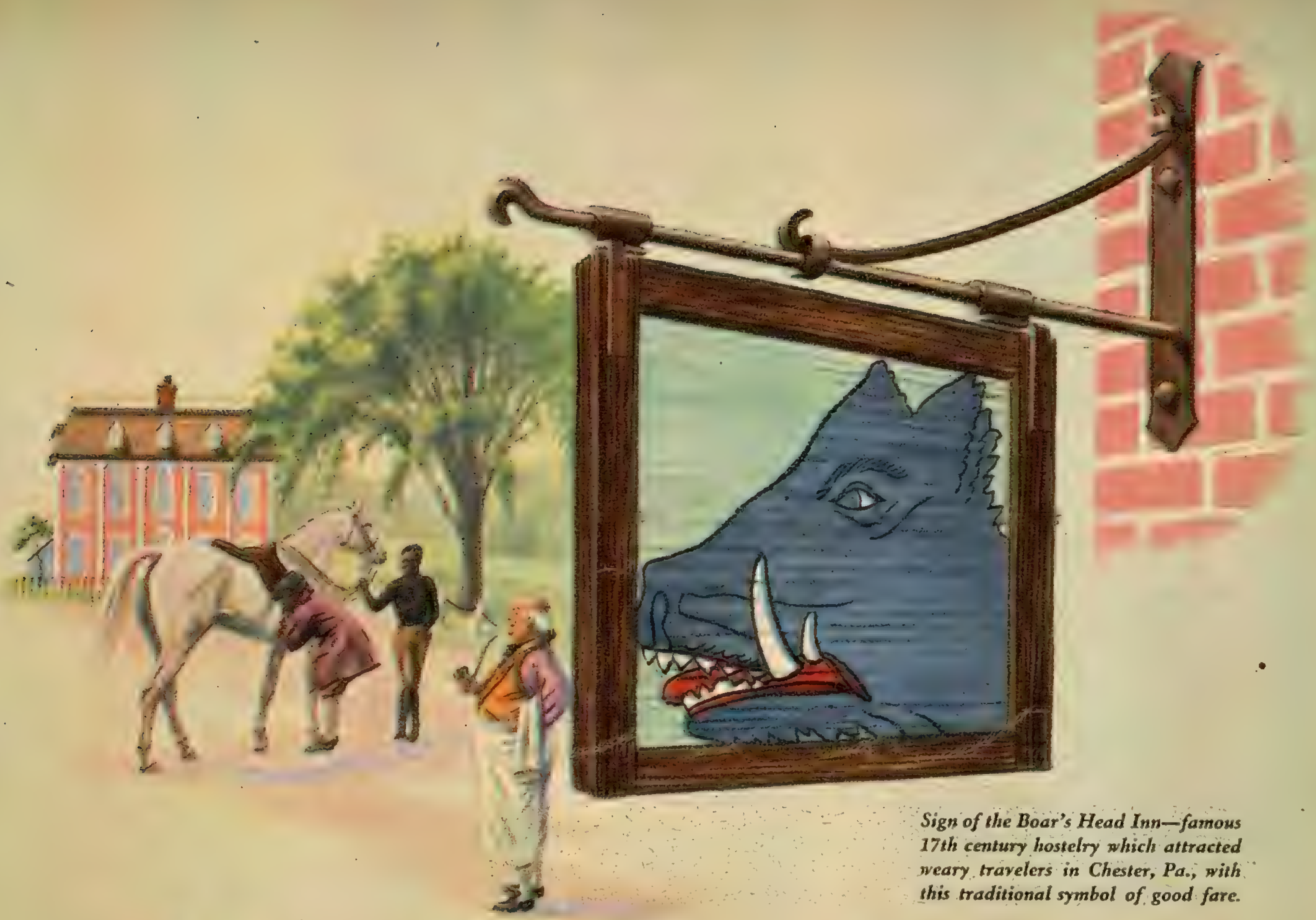
"No, sir."

"You didn't hear him say—"

But before he could finish the line of questioning, O'Dowd broke in as though afraid to allow him to continue.

"I was the one!" shouted O'Dowd. "Damn it, I told you I did it! You

(*Continued on page 70*)



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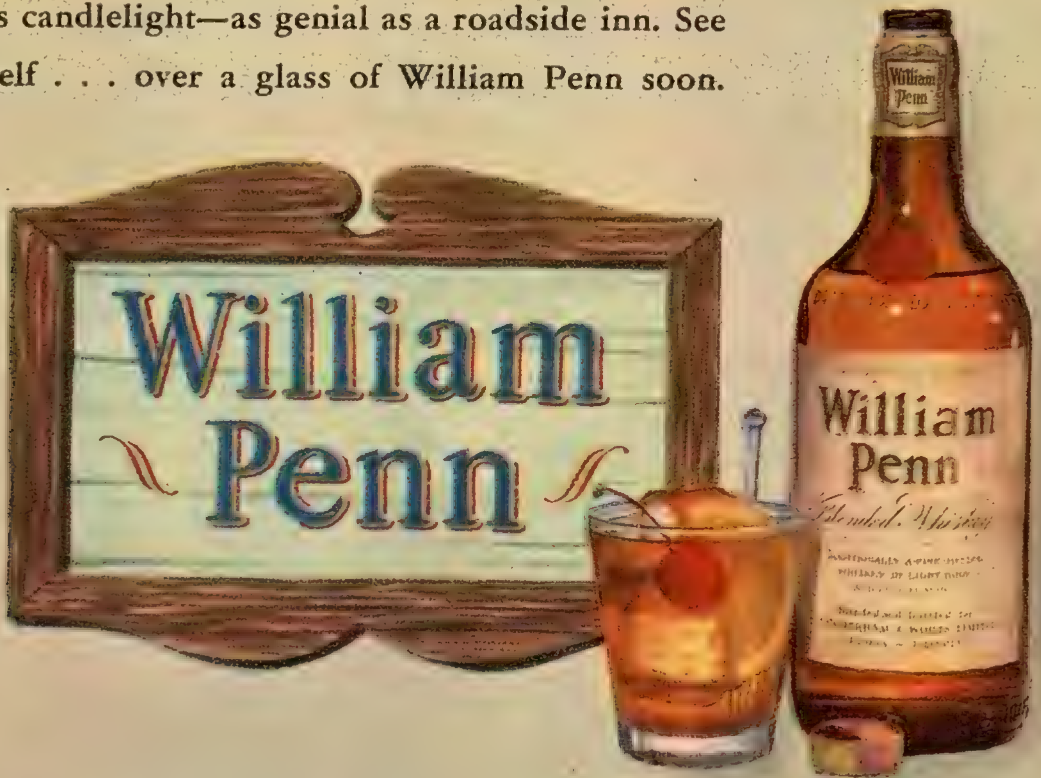

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(*Continued from page 68*)

caught the Spaniard and he told you there was only one guy!"

"That's true," the lieutenant went on. "But there's one thing I want to know. How does Levitan fit in?"

"Levitan?" Abbot repeated the name, and the very sound of it touched that deep core of feeling within him. "Levitan? He had nothing to do with this!"

"I told you it was me," said O'Dowd again. "I told the Spaniard my name was Levitan. After all, the guy was dead. It seemed like the smart thing to do."

IN the dark silence, Abbot looked at O'Dowd, but the big soldier turned away.

"Sure," said Abbot in a strange tight voice. "Sure, you had it all figured out—you were even there when Levitan got killed." Suddenly Abbot's grief, which he thought he had stultified long ago, twisted into a livid anger which put a rod of steel in his voice. "You big dumb louse—trying to hide behind a front-line guy! Trying to make him into a cheap crook. No wonder you're trying to take the rap for me. That was what I couldn't figure out. You just want to make yourself feel better! Well, you can't get away with it!"

"All right," O'Dowd said. "All right."

"All right, hell!" Abbot's hands were shaking. "You can't square this with Levitan by doing me a favor. Suppose there's a kickback and his wife is told that he was a crook? Why, you cheap punk!" He was too shaken to say any more, and he turned back to the lieutenant. "Just because I acted like a jerk that day doesn't mean I want to crawl out any more. I still don't know what got into me then. I was talking very big, and feeling very big. I had just heard something I'd been waiting to hear all my life. I felt so big and so anxious to tell everyone, there wasn't anything I couldn't have done. Walking away from the trucks was easy!" He shook his head. "It took a little while to figure out what I let myself in for, but I knew all right. I didn't report because—" He couldn't explain easily to an officer about the loyalties, willing or unwilling, among foot soldiers, and his voice flattened. "I just didn't report it." He turned to O'Dowd again, but the essence of what he had to say was too bitter to be put into words.

The lieutenant was silent for a moment, riffling papers, and even above the rustling sounds the room had a thick quiet. The lieutenant took a long, deep breath.

"Look, Abbot," he said. "I'm going to take O'Dowd's story, not because I'm the greatest guy in the world, but because I don't have to stick my neck out to let you off. Is that all right with you, major?"

"Under the circumstances, all right," said the chaplain slowly. He, in turn, glanced at O'Dowd. "And that's all right with you?"

"Sure," said O'Dowd, staring at his hands. "I'm sorry about Levitan, but it was *my* dough all along."

"All right, Abbot, you're just lucky," said the lieutenant. "Hand that money over, and you can go."

"The money?" said Abbot. He had been so anxious all along to be rid of it as incriminating evidence that it had never occurred to him that he might need it as his passport to freedom. His hands touched his flat pockets.

"I don't have it, sir."

"Where is it?"

"I threw it away," Abbot said softly. He found it suddenly hard to talk and he had to moisten his lips. "I tore it up and threw it away." He knew that they were all looking at him, demanding an explanation, but he really had nothing more to say. He felt terrifyingly empty, and even his bitter contempt for O'Dowd had turned to pity, because at least O'Dowd had enough in him to be ashamed of what he had done. There wasn't enough blame in the whole world to square O'Dowd with his own conscience, but now Sheriff would take care of that when he would see Levitan's wife.

But as Abbot looked at O'Dowd, he realized that there was really only a small difference between them; not very much, but enough for them to make opposite demands from life. The three men were still looking at Abbot, and he knew that they wanted the answer.

"I hated the money," said Abbot. He spoke very slowly so that perhaps he could make plain what had gone on in his mind. "I threw it away because I was afraid to be caught with it. But that's not the only reason. I hated that wad of dough because it kept getting in the way. Being a good musician wasn't the big thing any more, and that's just not so," he said in vehement protest. "I got rid of the money because I was afraid to be caught with it, and I hated it because it made every musician look like a punk." He paused again. "And Levitan was the most important clarinetist I ever met in my whole life." He looked at them all. "I didn't know about O'Dowd using Levitan's name until just now, but I'm more glad than ever that I got rid of the money."

THERE was a long silence in the little room, but it was no longer oppressive to Abbot. Whatever happened now, he was in the clear with himself. For the first time in weeks he could stand straight, and there was no tension in his chest. The lieutenant nodded toward the door.

"Beat it, soldier," he said, and he allowed the papers to fall from his hand to the desk.

THE END

IT COULD BE VERSE

Continued from Page 31

the surface of a man never seeing the sterling qualities that lay deep—

He sat up suddenly, a light in his eyes. Let Guy O'Higgins attain a cheap and fleeting notoriety, and even fifty dollars! He, Percy, would make Lisabeth immortal!

THERE was a summer morning a couple of days later when Lisabeth rang the Bracy doorbell and asked for Percy.

"Why, he's up in the attic, Lisabeth," said Mrs. Bracy. "Only, he insists on calling it the garret."

"The garret?" Lisabeth repeated. "What's he doing up there?"

"Starving," Percy's mother said with mock solemnity.

Lisabeth stared. "I don't get it," she confessed.

"Neither do I," sighed Mrs. Bracy. "Last night the Wilsons saw the light up there and phoned, because they thought it might be the barefoot burglar. I'm having to save all the bread crusts for Percy. He's busy working on—well, you'd better let him tell you, Lisabeth!"

She led the way to the stairs. Lisabeth was remembering how it was with Percy—how it had always been. He overdid things. Like the time when he was twelve and Indians became his absorbing interest. Percy hadn't been content to paint his face and set up a tepee in the back yard. No. He had taken to the woods, carrying a knife and wearing only a breechclout.

"Who's there?" a hollow voice called when Lisabeth knocked.

"Me. I've got to see you, Percy. It's important!"

He admitted her, grumbling something about the importance of not being disturbed. Lisabeth took a rocking chair and looked around disdainfully. The place was small and dim under a tiny skylight, and the years had shed things in it, like outmoded garments. Two old trunks, some bedsprings, a big wardrobe—

"Well," said Percy, "I suppose you came to tell me that Guy won the limerick contest?"

"Oh, that?" Lisabeth waved her hand. "No. Somebody in the city won it with a line that said something about the old man's fists bumping the ground when he sneezed. I don't remember."

Percy retreated to sit behind a table. Writing paper littered its top. And, sure enough, there was a plate of bread crusts!

"I give up," Lisabeth said suddenly. "What's the pitch?"

Percy looked pained. At any time he could shut his eyes and see Lisabeth—a daughter of the gods, divinely tall, and most divinely fair. She walked in beauty, like the night of cloudless climes and starry skies.

But when he opened his eyes, his inspiration wore bobby sox and a

Sloppy Joe sweater. And she used slang.

"I mean what gives, Percy? Are you inventing a new reducing diet?"

"I'm writing," he said loftily. "I am composing an Horatian ode."

"Oh," Lisabeth said as if relieved. "Is that all? I thought—"

"All? Ha! Have you ever read Ode on a Grecian Urn? Why, one poem like that and you're famous!" He paused suspiciously. "Say, what did you want to see me about, anyway?"

Lisabeth leaned forward confidentially. "It's a job, Perc—dad told me about it. They want somebody at the police station for two weeks. Twenty dollars a week, and—"

"Twenty a week?" sniffed the poet.

"And you might help catch the barefoot burglar!"

Percy sat erect, then slumped again, shaking his head. "No," he said. "You have to be twenty-one to get on the police force."

"You wouldn't be on the force. They're going to have two radio prowler cars, instead of one, to see if they can catch that man. All the cops will be out in the cars. You'd answer the phone at the station and relay word to the cops by short wave. And dad says it's a great opportunity for any young man who's interested in civic affairs."

Another time, and Percy would have sprung to the police station armed with various disguises, a fingerprint set, and a book on judo. But right now he had another love.

"No," he sighed, shuffling the papers. "I've got to write. I've got to have seclusion, and—well, atmosphere! But you thank Mr. Morton for thinking of me, Lisabeth. I hope they find somebody."

"Maybe," said Lisabeth, aiming a final shot, "they could get Guy O'Higgins."

"I suppose they could," Percy agreed absently.

HE was totally unprepared for what happened then. Lisabeth bounced from the rocker and for once slang failed her.

"Oh, you're—you're hopeless!" "That job is a chance for you to prove to dad—well, it's important to your future! But go ahead and write your silly old poetry! I *will* tell Guy about the job!"

The door banged behind her. Percy pondered briefly on the perversity of women. She had broken his train of thought; she had frightened away her rival, the Muse. He read what he had written:

Oft in the hour that sees the bright
day's death,
When sunset wraps the world in rosy
mist
And shepherds wind their pipes across
the lea,
And ev'ry flow'r by even's dew is kiss'd,
I catch thy sweetness on each passing
breath
Of summer wind, my own fair Lisabeth,
And walk with thee down dales of
Arcady.
Let other men split atoms, hitch the rays
Of that bright chariot—

Flowers-by-Wire

BRING THAT LOOK IN HER EYES...

If you can't be there yourself on Easter Sunday, nothing brings you closer more beautifully than Flowers-by-Telegraph.

Happy Easter,
Darling—
Pat

In any event—wire Flowers

FOR BIRTHDAYS, HOLIDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES—FLOWERS-BY-WIRE

As an example, you can send a $5.00 bouquet from Detroit to:

PLACE		Price of FLOWERS	+	Av. Cost of WIRE
YUMA	for	$5.00	+	63¢
SHREVEPORT	"	"	"	60¢
SHERIDAN	"	"	"	63¢
EMPORIA	"	"	"	60¢
WINNIPEG	"	"	"	88¢
PORTLAND	"	"	"	53¢
MACON	"	"	"	60¢

NOTE: These are just a few examples of how reasonable it is to send flowers by wire.

Just follow these 3 simple steps:

1 Go to any florist with the Florists' Telegraph Delivery Association seal on his window.

2 Tell him kind of flowers and amount you wish to spend.

3 He does the rest! He wires your order and message for card to FTD florist in other town—who then delivers the flowers.

It's *easy*—just be sure florist has FTD seal (shown at left) on his window.

FLORISTS' TELEGRAPH DELIVERY ASSOCIATION
484 East Grand Boulevard, Detroit 7, Michigan

The chariot had a flat tire, or suffered from whatever happens to chariots. He wrote furiously, and crumpled the sheets and threw them away, and wrote again. Some day, Lisabeth would understand.

His imagination leaped into the future. Lisabeth was the wife of Police Chief O'Higgins, a tall and stately woman with an unguessed sorrow in her eyes. How often, when no one was looking, did she reach into the bookcase for the Anthology of Great American Poems? How often, reading again those immortal lines by Percy Bracy, did she dream of What Might Have Been? . . .

"Percy!" his mother's voice called. "You'll have to go to the store for me, dear. I need a pound of cheese."

MR. SWITZER, the grocer, was keeping three customers waiting while he explained how he would catch the barefoot burglar.

"Just leave a window open, careless like," said Mr. Switzer, who hardly stood above his own counter, "then sprinkle a box of big carpet tacks on the floor, and have your gun handy." He pointed an imaginary gun with one hand and rang the cash register loudly with the other, and Mrs. Watson jumped. "Yes, sir!" said Mr. Switzer. "He'd be plumb helpless!"

"Maybe," said Sam Hartwell. "But they say he walks like a cat, and who ever heard of a cat stepping on a tack? Besides, he's a big man, and if you just wounded him, he'd be dangerous."

Mrs. Watson shoved a milk bottle across the counter. "How do you know he's a big man?" she challenged. "The paper says he's robbed eleven houses in two weeks, but nobody has ever seen him!"

"They measured his tracks," Mr. Hartwell explained. "He always takes off his shoes before he goes into a house."

"That's his *modus operandi,*" said Percy, getting interested.

Mr. Hartwell's mouth stayed open. "How's that, son?"

"It's his method of operating," Percy explained.

"Maybe so. Anyway, they figure from his tracks that he's about six foot four. Well, starting tonight, there'll be two prowler cars out around town. I guess they'll get him pretty soon."

Percy went home, halfway sorry he hadn't listened to Lisabeth.

MRS. BRACY summoned him to the telephone. "Hiya, Longfellow!" said Guy O'Higgins' voice. "You turned down a swell deal, pal. All I got to do is—"

"Oh," said Percy, "you got the job?"

"Natch! Lisabeth said you didn't want it. She said you were writing poetry. Well, what's a good rhyme for abode, Greenleaf?"

"What do you want to know for?" Percy asked suspiciously.

Guy laughed heartily. "You wouldn't believe me, but today's Tribune has a limerick all about you, Perc! No kidding! Listen—here's the way the four lines go:

Now, bills filled the humble abode
Of a struggling young poet named Strode.
  So he listed his creditors
  And wrote to the editors—

"Ain't that super?" Guy demanded. "I'm going to try another last line. You help me, Perc, and I'll split the fifty with you. How about, 'I have come to the end of my road'?"

"I haven't got time to waste on limericks!" Percy said impatiently.

"Well, so long, Wadsworth!" Guy retorted. "I've got to go on duty pretty soon, but I'll be seein' ya!"

The rest of the week was mostly like that: errands to run, unimportant phone calls to answer. Percy kept to the garret, and the poem progressed despite interruptions. His father returned briefly from a business trip, and went out of town again. The barefoot burglar left his tracks in four more houses.

This stung the local weekly paper to a front-page editorial criticizing

THE COAST WAS CLEAR FOR DAN WHEN...
SHE'S DRIFTIN' FAST, SIR. RIGHT FOR THAT BIG YACHT!
GET ME A RIFLE AND SOME CLIPS. WE'LL HAVE TO SINK HER QUICK!
ENSIGN DAN PAINE, U.S. COAST GUARD, WINDING UP A LONG PATROL, SIGHTS A DERELICT MINE
ANOTHER HIT, SIR. A FEW MORE WILL FINISH HER
HERE'S HOPING SHE GOES DOWN INSTEAD OF UP
CGC-83279
BY GEORGE, HE'S DONE IT! TEN MINUTES MORE AND...
WE'D HAVE BEEN BLOWN SKY HIGH
WELL DONE, SKIPPER. DROP YOUR HOOK AND COME ABOARD
YES, SIR
I'LL HAVE TO CLEAN UP FAST
CGC-83
THANKS FOR THE RAZOR, SAILOR. THIS IS A SWELL BLADE. NEVER HAD A QUICKER, EASIER SHAVE
THIN GILLETTES ARE PLENTY KEEN, ALL RIGHT
I'M INSPECTING YOUR STATION WEDNESDAY, MR. PAINE
SO I'VE HEARD, SIR. WE'RE HAVING A SUPPER AND DANCE IN YOUR HONOR
M-M-M-M NOT BAD LOOKING!
GOODBYE, ADMIRAL GRANT. AND I'M GLAD YOU'RE COMING WEDNESDAY ALSO, MISS GRANT
I'LL LOOK FOR YOU AT THE DANCE
YOU GET GOOD-LOOKING, REFRESHING SHAVES QUICKLY AND EASILY WITH THIN GILLETTE BLADES. THESE ARE THE SHARPEST AND SMOOTHEST-FINISHED LOW-PRICED BLADES MONEY CAN BUY. ALSO THEY FIT YOUR GILLETTE RAZOR PRECISELY AND PROTECT YOUR FACE FROM THE IRRITATING EFFECT OF MISFIT BLADES. ASK YOUR DEALER FOR THIN GILLETTES!
BE SURE YOU HAVE A THIN GILLETTE SHAVE THAT NIGHT, DAN
Gillette
BLADES
4 for 10¢

the council, the police force, and the street-lighting system. The metropolitan papers sent their own reporters to town to cover the story, and Percy toyed with the idea of contacting the Tribune's man. He had decided to mail his poem to the Tribune s Sunday Literature Page, a dignified section given over to book reviews and occasional verse.

That way he came at last, and in the best tradition of garrets and bread crusts, to the end of his labors. It was on an evening when Mrs. Bracy had gone to a movie, and the streets were loud with the sirens of the two police cars scurrying about fruitlessly. To all this, Percy was oblivious. There remained the task of choosing a title.

He tried Ode to Lisabeth and Ode to My Lady's Loveliness and was satisfied with neither. Simplicity was what he sought, and finally he wrote on a separate sheet, "I call this, quite simply, The Ode," and addressed the envelope. There was just enough time left to get it in the city mail.

"Well," said Mrs. Bracy when she returned and found Percy raiding the refrigerator, "it's about time your appetite picked up! I've been about to call the doctor."

"I'm all right," Percy protested. "I've finished the poem."

"Thank goodness for that! Are you through with poetry now?"

"Through? Of course not. I'll write some sonnets perhaps."

"Rats!" said Mrs. Bracy, turning her head toward the stairs.

"Why, mother!"

"I don't mean your poetry, Percy. I mean rats in the attic—hear them? Did you leave those bread crusts out every night?"

"I guess maybe I did, mother. I never thought."

Mrs. Bracy sighed. "You always invite rats and mice when you leave food out, Percy. Well, I'll just have to call the exterminators tomorrow. Your poetry is going to cost us about twenty-five dollars!"

THAT next day, Percy found that suspense is not conducive to composition. He moped around the hall all day, watching for the postman, who brought nothing but bills in his two deliveries. Finally, in late afternoon, Percy wandered down to Schnable's Confectionery. He was drinking a coke when Lisabeth came in.

This time, he told himself, he would be polite but ineffably sad. Perhaps she would notice the too-bright, haunted light in his eyes.

She slid onto a stool. "How's the verse, Perc?" she asked casually.

"Fine. In the laps of the gods now. Have a coke?"

"Why, natch—thanks."

He remarked that the Strand was showing a Van Johnson movie.

"I know," Lisabeth nodded. "I'm going with Guy. He gets off work in a few minutes."

"You're going with Guy a lot, aren't you?" Percy said, and forgot to be pale and sad. "Well, that's just fine with me! You just run right along, because I—"

"You listen to me, Percy Bracy!" Lisabeth flared. "I haven't seen you for simply ages and ages, and when I went to your house to tell you about that swell job, you humiliated me something foul! Maybe you didn't know I had practically begged dad on my bended knees to give you a chance at that job! You've treated me simply *ghast!*"

"I can find my own jobs!" Percy said with dignity. "After all, I'm not a—a gigolo, to be getting jobs from a woman! I'm a man!"

"A man my aching back!" the girl cried. "Sitting in a musty old garret writing stuff you didn't even offer to show me! That's not my idea of a man. After all, Guy not only writes clever poetry, but he's doing something constructive!"

"Bah!" said Percy. "Limericks!"

AT that instant he saw Guy O'Higgins' red head reflected in the mirror. "Hi, beautiful! Hi, Tennyson!" he greeted them. "Make me a coke, bloke!" And then he shoved a sheet of paper in front of Percy, and snickered. "Something I dashed off in an idle moment," he said. "Read it, Shakespeare!"

Lisabeth was already reading it, and shouting with laughter.

There was a young fellow named Percy
Whose writing was corny but versy;
He had scribbler's itch,
But he never got rich,
For the editors showed him no mercy!

"Very funny!" Percy said, and the deadly calm he had sought to attain descended upon him and made him capable of one master thrust. He said, "Yes—it's very good. In fact, Guy, you remind me of a famous American poet!"

"How's that? Who?"

"Why," said Percy, getting off his stool, "if you were just only a half-wit, Guy, you'd be wittier!"

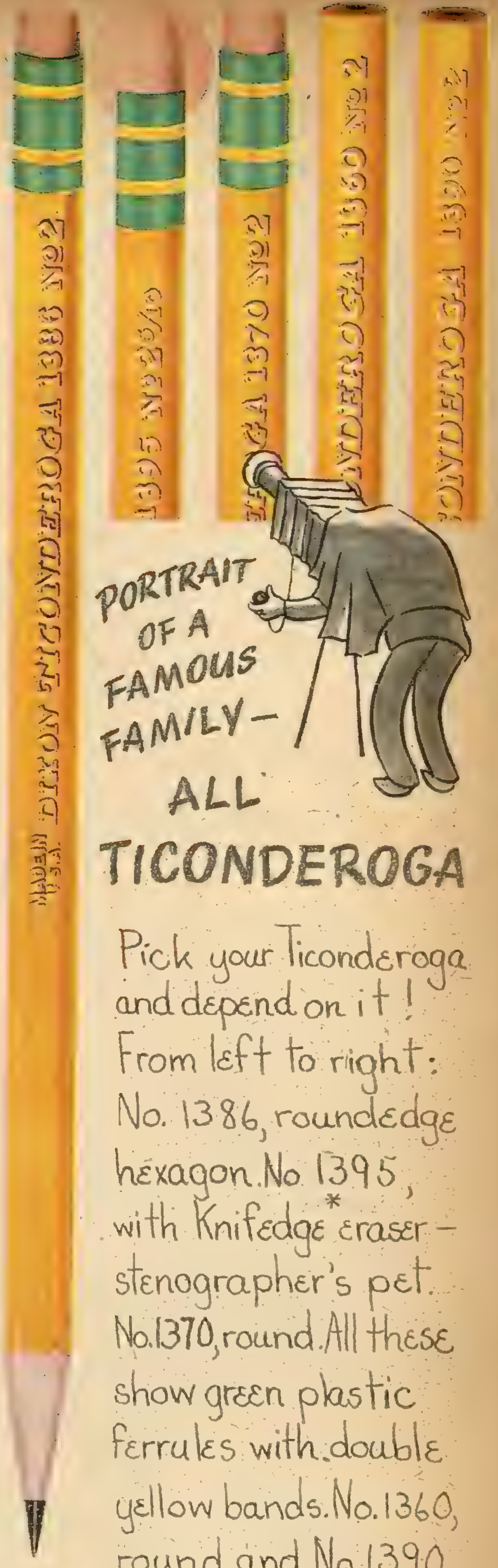
He stalked away.

Percy stumbled homeward, taking a circuitous way, suffering at every step. He would create something out of the depths of this dark hour, out of the cracked crucible of his heart. He would write such dank, sorrowful poetry as to put Poe to shame, and Lisabeth, reading it in after-years when she was the wife of Mayor O'Higgins—

"Special delivery for Mr. Percy Bracy," said the man on the bicycle, and Percy jerked himself back to the present. He was at his own door. The envelope was from the Tribune!

Percy decided that the sacred task of opening the envelope could only be accomplished in his garret. He went softly up the stairs and turned the knob, and discovered that the attic door was locked from the outside and stuffed with rags.

He turned the key and pulled on the door. His mother suddenly appeared in the hall below.



Pick your Ticonderoga and depend on it! From left to right: No. 1386, roundedge hexagon. No 1395, with Knifedge* eraser—stenographer's pet. No. 1370, round. All these show green plastic ferrules with double yellow bands. No. 1360, round and No. 1390, roundedge hexagon, both without erasers.

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No. 2 Soft
No. 2 5/10 Firm
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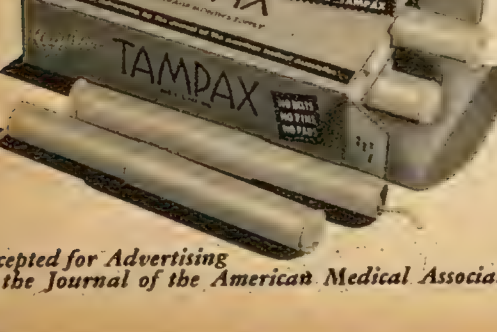

Accepted for Advertising by the Journal of the American Medical Association

"Percy—don't open that door!" she called. "The exterminators have—"

But the door burst open in Percy's face. A rank choking cloud of smoke poured out and a small stoop-shouldered man in a blue serge suit stumbled coughing into Percy's arms. The small man had huge bare feet.

"You hear me, Percy? Close that door—quick! We're fumigating!"

The little man made a queer strangling noise. Percy let out a startled yell and grabbed him, and together they rolled down the stairs. They brought up at Mrs. Bracy's feet, and Percy was on top.

"Call the police!" he gasped. "I got him! Call the police!"

Mrs. Bracy said, "For the land's sake!" and stood rooted.

The barefoot man began to struggle weakly.

"Call the police!" Percy yelled.

Mrs. Bracy moved toward the door instead. The bell was ringing. She opened the door, and Lisabeth burst into the hall, followed by Guy O'Higgins and a large young man.

"Percy!" Lisabeth called loudly. "Oh—here he is! Percy, this is Mr. Riley of the Tribune, and you've won, and— What on earth are you doing on the floor? Who's that man?"

"It's the barefoot burglar!" Percy panted. "Will *somebody* call the police? I can't hold him always!"

"Now, wait—wait!" begged Mr. Riley. "You couldn't win the limerick contest and capture the barefoot burglar all in one day! Well, by gosh, I believe he has, at that! Look at the size of those feet!"

IT took ten minutes to get things only partly straightened out, with Percy and the Tribune reporter both sitting on the barefoot burglar until the police came and took him away, still dazed from the effects of the fumigation. After that, everybody sat in the living room. Lisabeth beamed at Percy. Guy O'Higgins was silent and respectful. And the Tribune man plied Percy with rapid-fire questions.

"A mighty clever last line—a good pun!" he said, chuckling. "I was in Schnable's when the first edition hit town, and when I heard this young lady say you'd won, I thought it might be a good promotion feature to phone in a little story about you. It's the first time anybody outside the city has cracked that fifty-dollar jackpot. May I use your phone?"

He dashed into the hall. Percy shook his head. "But I didn't send in any last line!" he said. "I couldn't have won! I—let me see what this is!"

He opened the crumpled envelope. The fifty-dollar check was crisp enough, and there was a short note congratulating him on having won the limerick contest. It didn't say a word about his poem.

Mrs. Bracy exclaimed, "For the land's sake!" and went to make some coffee. Lisabeth came over and gave Percy a hug. Riley was phoning:

"City desk? I want a rewrite—quick! Guess who just caught the barefoot burglar? The kid who won today's Tribune limerick contest, that's who! O.K.—now you've got the kid's name and address in the paper. All right, the barefoot burglar's name is Henry Jones, alias Henry Johnson. You can check on his police record. O.K. Jones got into the Bracy house last night when Mrs. Bracy was at the theater and the boy, Percy, was downtown, mailing his winning last line to the Trib. They came home and surprised him, and he sneaked upstairs and hid in the attic. There's no window. Mrs. Bracy locked the door a few minutes after that, because she had heard Jones moving around and thought it was rats. Get it?

"So Jones was trapped in the attic," Riley went on. "Today, Mrs. Bracy called the exterminators. They came late, and Jones had to hide in a big wardrobe in the attic, and he couldn't see what they were doing. They set off smoke pots—some kind of gas. Then the kid—Percy Bracy—came home and opened the attic door. There was a terrific hand-to-hand struggle. They rolled down the stairs. The kid caught him, singlehanded. Yeah—eighteen."

"Let me see that paper!" Percy said weakly, because it was finally becoming clear that the check was real and that Riley meant what he was saying. And there was the limerick:

Now, bills filled the humble abode
Of a struggling young poet named Strode.
So he listed his creditors
And wrote to the Editors—
"I CALL THIS, QUITE SIMPLY, THE ODE!"

The print swam before Percy's eyes. He wondered just what sort of mix-up in the Tribune's editorial offices had caused his note accompanying the poem to get separated from that masterpiece and to wind up in the Limerick Editor's basket instead. There were things beyond his comprehension—things like the moods and whims of the fair sex.

HE looked up at Lisabeth, thinking how the turquoise earrings would match the limpid azure of her eyes. He didn't care any longer whether the poem was published or not. Some day he would read it to the only audience who mattered.

"Gosh!" exclaimed Guy O'Higgins, springing to his feet. "It's time for the second show, Lisabeth!"

Lisabeth made a mouth. "You go on, Guy," she said. "I really don't care about that picture. I—I think Van Johnson is just ghast!"

"Well—" said Guy. "Well—nice going, Perc. So long."

Mr. Riley of the Tribune was hanging up the phone. Lisabeth gave Percy another hug.

"It was horribly clever, Perc," she said. "And you're just going to be simply famous!"

"Oh, sure," Percy said, grinning happily. "Oh, yes—natch!"

THE END

LIBERTY GOES TO THE MOVIES

WITH HELEN PARKER

Tierney and Price are dreaming of dwelling in marble halls.

DRAGONWYCK

(Fox) Gene Tierney, Vincent Price, Walter Huston, Anne Revere, Jessica Tandy

ANYA SETON, who wrote the book on which this film is based, is a lady whose leisure has led her into some thorough historical research, which usually turns up in her novels. For these the movie companies scramble, whispering figures like $150,000.

Dragonwyck is the expensive plum picked by Fox, then given to director Joseph Mankiewicz, who digested it very carefully for its screen version. The period is about 1850, and the backdrop exposes the last of the estate-holding Dutch patroons. Nicholas Van Ryn (Vincent Price) is one of these heirs—a tall, proud, and cruel aristocrat if ever there was one. He politely but peremptorily summons Miranda Wells, a distant cousin (Gene Tierney) from her father's Connecticut farm, to come and be a companion to his daughter.

Nicholas is capable of loving no one but himself, but he is long on cupidity. Tiring of his gross and dull wife, he very adroitly poisons her—then takes Miranda as his bride. The fact that Miranda, in the eyes of upper New York State society, is a peasant and therefore to be ostracized, makes life a bit grim for her. Then, when undeniable manifestations of Nicholas' sadism begin to show through his impeccable manners—she's quite blatantly miserable. His icy fury reaches its apex when their son, No. 1 item on his list of desirable objects, dies at birth.

Miranda next discovers that he is a dope addict and that he is beginning a campaign of rubbing her out with poisoned flowers, and it all gets too thick even for her sturdy blood. She makes her escape, and Nicholas is shot by a member of the proletariat just after making a remarkable, crazed speech against democracy.

Tierney, a debutante with a talent for looking greedy, is judiciously cast as the romance-starved little Puritan. And Mr. Price as Van Ryn has never had so much latitude for exhibiting his *savoir-faire*. Supporting, Walter Huston and Anne Revere as the rock-ribbed New England farmer and his wife are as authentic as anyone's imagination could require. Jessica Tandy's warm bit as a lame Irish servant girl is also noteworthy.

While it isn't the most profound attack on the feudal system (that would have to be done in modern dress), still, Dragonwyck's humanism is not completely submerged by the fetid personal affairs of its principals. Costumes and sets have been given loving attention, and the scenes are nicely cohesive. And, naturally, all the women will enjoy suffering at the hands of Nicholas—such an attractive, such an out-and-out villain.

OPEN CITY

(Minerva-Excelsa Production)
Aldo Fabrizi, Anna Magnani, Marcell Pagliero, Vito Annicchiarico, Maria Michi

IF the opportunity is given you, don't miss seeing this remarkable Italian film, Open City, which was made immediately after liberation, and which gets closer to the hearts and sorrows of this torn people than any American version.

The hero is a priest (Aldo Fabrizi) who, for his humane acts in assisting radical members of the underground, is eventually shot by the Nazis. His last words, to a fellow priest, are: "It's no trick to die well—the difficult thing is to live well." The rest of the cast is superb, the story, by Sergio Amidei, is a brilliant show of fast scenarizing and the English titles by Pietro di Donato are excellent translations. It's a moving, gripping experience.

INSIDE ★
Paramount

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April showers bring May flowers, but this April there's a rip-roaring cloudburst of thrills and suspense that brings the Big Three . . . ALAN LADD, VERONICA LAKE and BILL BENDIX . . . in Raymond Chandler's story of murder in full bloom,

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Ladd walks in on a killing . . . and walks out on that curvaceous blonde . . . fighting his way through one thrilling jam after another with all the tense daring-do that has made him such a sensation.

★ ★ ★

And Bendix delivers still another of his rocking, socking performances.

★ ★ ★

Doris Dowling and Howard da Silva, the saloon sweetie and bartender in "The Lost Weekend," are a pair of two-timers who try to cheat Ladd out of love.

★ ★ ★

So sit tight in your seat, and check your blood pressure at the door, because Director George Marshall has come through with this year's most exciting whodunit. And you can take our word for it . . . "THE BLUE DAHLIA" won't loll 'ya to sleep!

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THERE'S ROMANCE IN RAILROADS

Continued from Page 19

its appearance until after the Civil War, and even then as an experiment and novelty. Your father will probably remember the "ten-minute stop for refreshments," with the hazardous rush for the station lunchroom to battle for a cup of coffee and a sandwich.

All aboard! You were under way! But not for long. Before you reached the next stop, *if* you reached it ever, the engine would run out of wood. In that event, you and the rest of the passengers would find yourselves assailing the nearest farmer's fence or his sapling grove with saw or ax. The trick was to get the wood cut and piled in the locomotive before the farmer arrived with his flintlock shotgun.

As to your chances of escaping adventure or one of the several hazards of early railroading, they were slim. There was always the chance that the boiler would blow up. It frequently did, so frequently that railroads took to putting a car loaded with baled cotton between the engine and the first passenger car, to soften the effect of the regularly scheduled explosion. And when this was not sufficient protection, one early railroad added a car containing a Negro band before the first passenger coach. The duty of the band was to beguile the passengers with sweet music and act as a buffer if she blew.

Derailment was usual. You and the rest of the passengers were expected to sweat the train back onto the rails again. And spikes were forever coming out of the rails and causing them to break. When this happened, the rail would curl up and come through the floor boards. If you were fortunate enough to avoid death or injury, you could tell the tale dramatically upon your arrival: "Gad, sir! I tell you it missed me by the breadth of the seam of my gaiters!"

CASUALTIES were few from 1835 on because the earliest trains didn't run fast enough to get into trouble. But after 1846 there occurred a series of appalling disasters resulting in enormous loss of life, with the result that public outcry brought on the first safety measures and safety legislation. Out of these came the modern signal and block systems, improved braking, and other devices that have made railroad trips one of the safest means of travel in the world per mile. And by the time of the Civil War, the telegraph for railroad communication was in use.

Early sleeping cars of 1849-50 or thereabouts were horrors containing bare wooden shelves in three tiers, and the first Pullman car, "Old No. 9," didn't appear until 1859, in the form of a reconstructed day coach. By 1865 the Pioneer, the first real Pullman sleeping car, was built with folding upper berths, black-inlaid walnut woodwork, hot-air heating, and French plush upholstery. What luxury! And by 1887 the vestibule Pullman car appeared practically as we of the older generation came to know it.

My generation grew up to accept the speed, safety, and luxury of railroad travel as a standard of the age, though I still remember the thrill when I was a boy of a ride down the Hudson from Albany on the Empire State Express, *circa* 1905. She was the first train to run at a mile a minute, and by gum, she did it, because my father clocked it by the second hand of his gold stem-winding match.

Today we accept as equally a part of our miracle age the streamliner, the 100-mile-an-hour straightaway, the beds of hotel quality and comfort, the drawing rooms and compartments and roomettes and suites, the on-the-minute arrival and departure, the club lounges and observation cars, the luncheonette and dining cars. And like children who are never satisfied, we are already asking, "And what about tomorrow?" And the railroads have the answer. What is more, they are already preparing it in terms of new equipment and new standards of travel.

HOW can the railroads compete with the rapidly growing air lines in this, the beginning of the air and atomic age? The answer is obvious: luxury, safety, dependability, more for less money; and for the next twenty-five years at least no royal potentate will ever have traveled in such style as the poorest-paying passenger on American railroad lines.

The railroads are beaten on speed and are wisely not even attempting to match the comets and shooting stars of air travel. But there are gaps in schedule to be closed and better runs between key cities to be made with the 100-mile-an-hour speeds already achieved with safety and which will become standard with the new equipment that will come from the shops. To this end, the railroads have designed, tested, and ordered fabulous and gigantic power plants to haul their freight and passenger trains.

The Pennsy has on order fifty of the new Class T-1 locomotives, streamlined coal-burning self-propelled shells of steel with an over-all length of close to 123 feet. These monsters will haul a full passenger train on seamless steel rails at a steady 100 miles every hour without a sway or a tremor.

Being tested and likewise on order in the shops is the S-2, another behemoth, the first new direct steam-turbine locomotive designed to develop 6,900 shaft horsepower. The New York Central and the Santa Fe are experimenting with similar giants, all tending toward lighter weight, faster and more economical operation, and larger loads, for the railroads will still be called upon to move the goods of the nation as well as to transport its citizens. And freight trains 100 cars in length will be whipped across the countryside at speeds never before attained.

But it is in the intimate field of passenger comfort that the railroads will look the air lines squarely in the eye in the next quarter of a century with the challenge, "Match us!" And it won't be easy for the air lines, for the railroads' hotels on wheels, with fine appointments, first-rate service, modern equipment, beauty and luxury, will equal any and surpass most of the great hostelries.

All the crack trains on which you used to ride, the New York Central's 20th Century Limited, Commodore Vanderbilt, Iroquois, Southwestern Limited, Detroiter, and the Pennsy's fliers, the Broadway Limited, Spirit of St. Louis, Liberty Limited, the Pittsburgher, and the Golden Triangle, are in the process of re-equipment and refurbishing with the latest designs of light-weight, up-to-date sleeping cars, club-observation cars, diners, and de luxe coaches.

The Pennsylvania has $21,000,000 worth of orders placed, while the New York Central system has just placed $34,000,000 in orders representing twenty-two streamlined sleeping-car trains totaling 420 passenger cars of new design, which, added to orders previously placed, brings this system's expansion expenses up to $56,000,000, covering some 720 new cars.

THIS, say you, is all very well for the wealthy, but what about the fellow who hasn't the price for de luxe suites and still must travel? The answer is the three-tier sleeper which brings a comfortable snooze at less than the price of an upper berth in the old-type cars. In the daytime these make up into de luxe coaches of three- and six-passenger compartments somewhat on the style of the continental trains. The coach traveler will have his own lounge and smoker and restaurant car where low-priced meals will be served at a buffet counter.

And as the price lists come down and the equipment improves, the middle-budget family which could afford a lower berth in the old days will now enjoy the privacy, comfort, and super-gadgetry of the new roomettes or duplex roomettes or even the new compartments and drawing rooms.

And at the top of the heap, those who can afford it will travel as no one has ever traveled in the past. Here the railroads plan to open Pandora's box and pamper the customer as never before. Recreation cars, which in the daytime will have club and lounge facilities, will at night be converted into little theaters for entertainment or the latest movies, or used as smart night clubs for dancing.

There will be club cars equipped with libraries, writing rooms, radios, radiotelephones connecting with all telephone lines of cities throughout the country so that the furiously functioning business man need never be wholly cut off from his office. And in the same car will be a playroom for children, with a nurse in charge.

In the dining car you will find new appointments, new seating arrangements, vibrationless tables, spot-ray illumination, intercar phone communication, and super-service and super-cookery. Already the chefs and waiters of the Pennsylvania Railroad have been summoned by J. F. Finnegan, superintendent of the Commissary Department, to attend refresher courses in service to wean them from the rush-and-grouch habits of the war years.

CURIOUSLY, for one of the very latest wrinkles the designers have gone back to one of the very earliest ones — the elevated glass-enclosed observation roof, seating twenty-four passengers and enabling them to obtain an unobstructed view ahead and back and on all sides of the train as it speeds through the countryside. Great-grandpappy, who rode atop the roof of the coaches drawn by the De Witt Clinton or the Thunderbolt, had the same view, only he got his whiskers singed along with it.

And while you ride in the utmost comfort, the sciences of electronics and metallurgy, chemistry and physics will be riding with you, guarding and protecting your safety. Even radar will eventually play its role in fog and mist. Accidents will become a thing of the past. Only acts of God will remain, and there is still St. Christopher to intercede for you if you are friendly with him.

The air age may one day undo the railroads as once the railroads made obsolete the stagecoaches and the canal barges and the pony express. But in the meantime, pack your bags, make your reservations, get ready to enjoy a train ride or transcontinental voyage fit for a millionaire, a king, or an American citizen.

THE END

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*EDDIE HAS DANDRUFF

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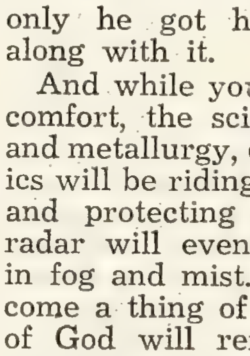

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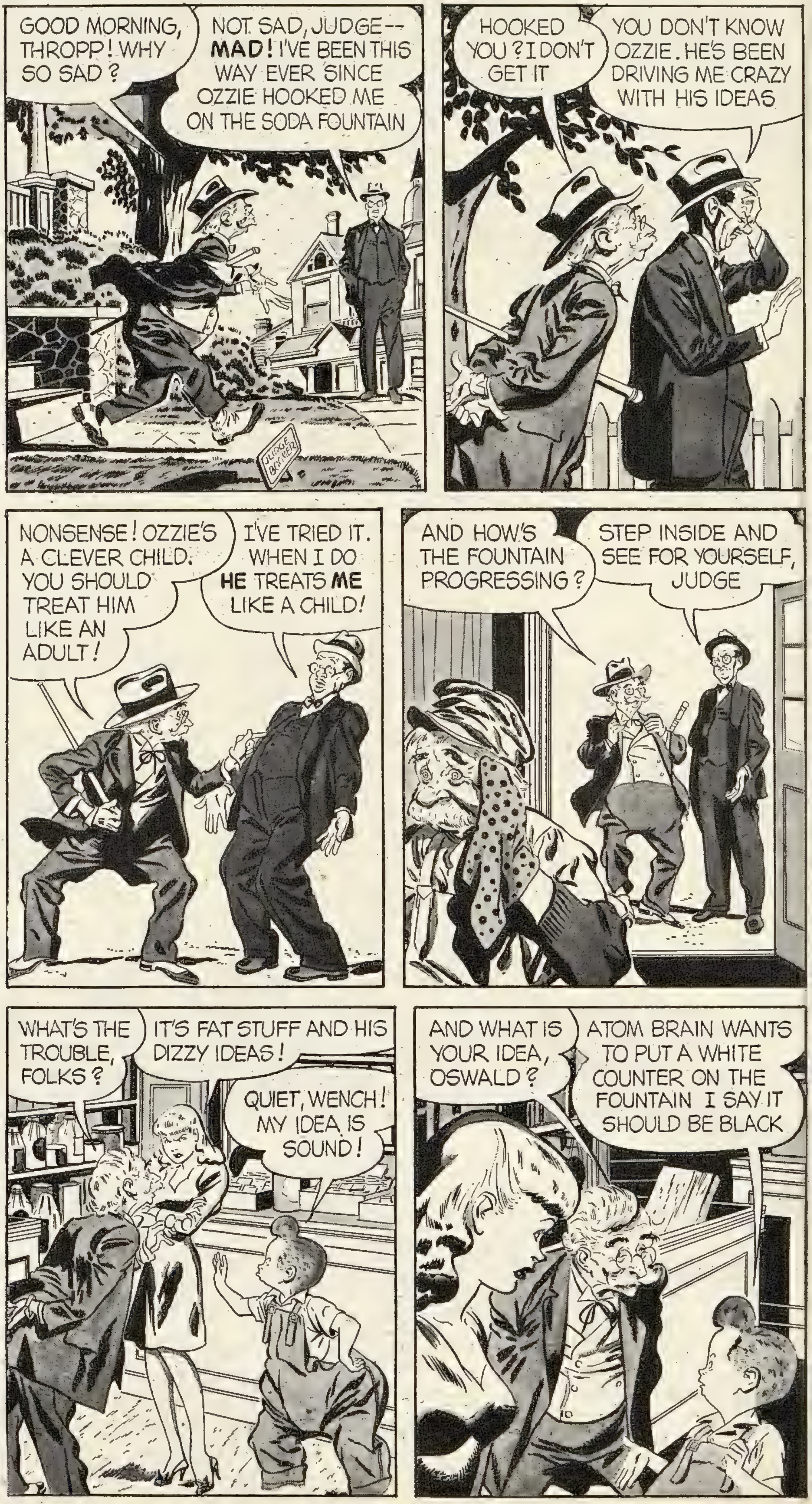
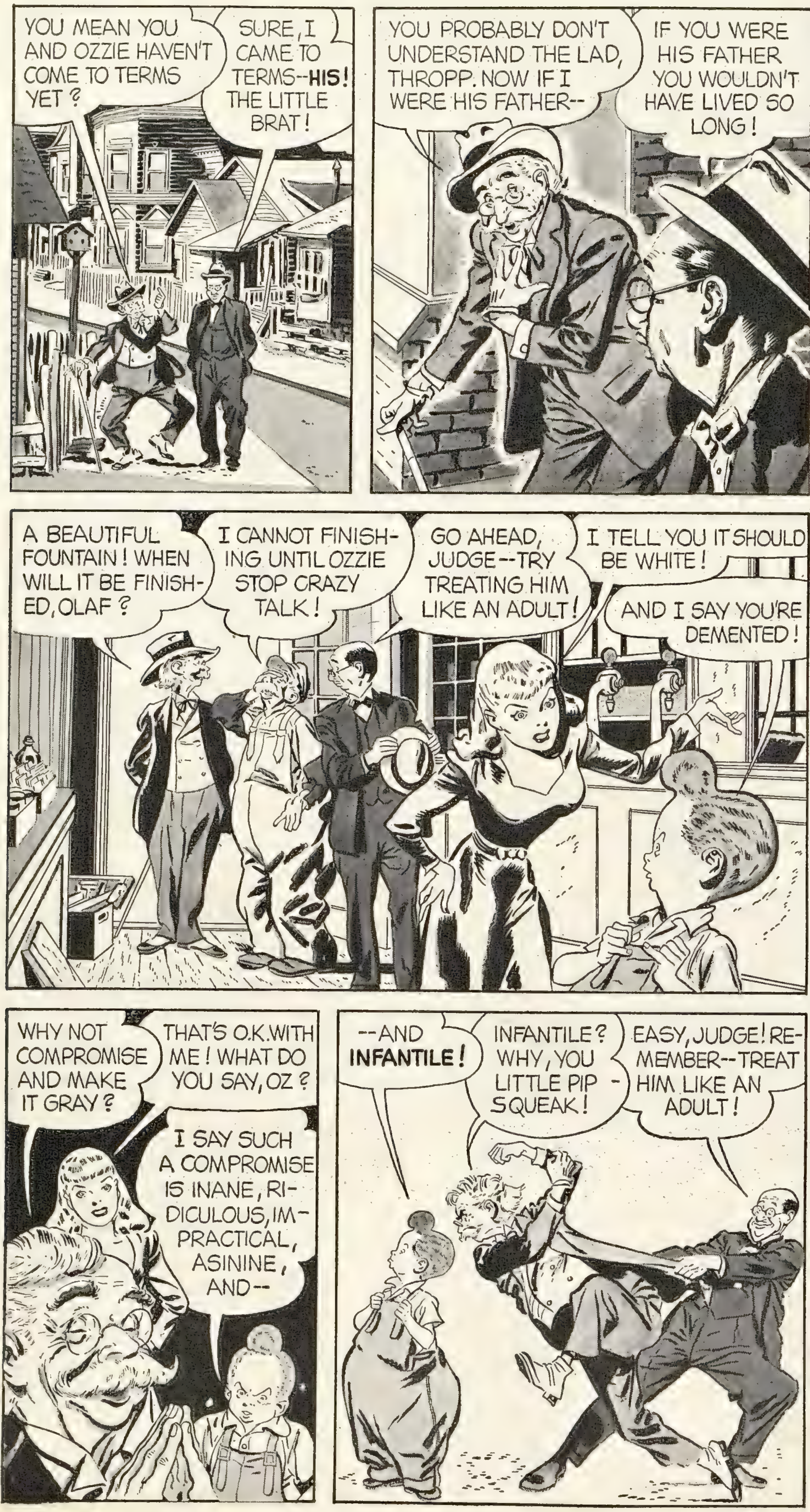
THE THROPP


GOOD MORNING, THROPP! WHY SO SAD?
NOT SAD, JUDGE--MAD! I'VE BEEN THIS WAY EVER SINCE OZZIE HOOKED ME ON THE SODA FOUNTAIN
JUDGE BOOMER
HOOKED YOU? I DON'T GET IT
YOU DON'T KNOW OZZIE. HE'S BEEN DRIVING ME CRAZY WITH HIS IDEAS
NONSENSE! OZZIE'S A CLEVER CHILD. YOU SHOULD TREAT HIM LIKE AN ADULT!
I'VE TRIED IT. WHEN I DO HE TREATS ME LIKE A CHILD!
AND HOW'S THE FOUNTAIN PROGRESSING?
STEP INSIDE AND SEE FOR YOURSELF, JUDGE
WHAT'S THE TROUBLE, FOLKS?
IT'S FAT STUFF AND HIS DIZZY IDEAS!
QUIET, WENCH! MY IDEA IS SOUND!
AND WHAT IS YOUR IDEA, OSWALD?
ATOM BRAIN WANTS TO PUT A WHITE COUNTER ON THE FOUNTAIN I SAY IT SHOULD BE BLACK

FAMILY

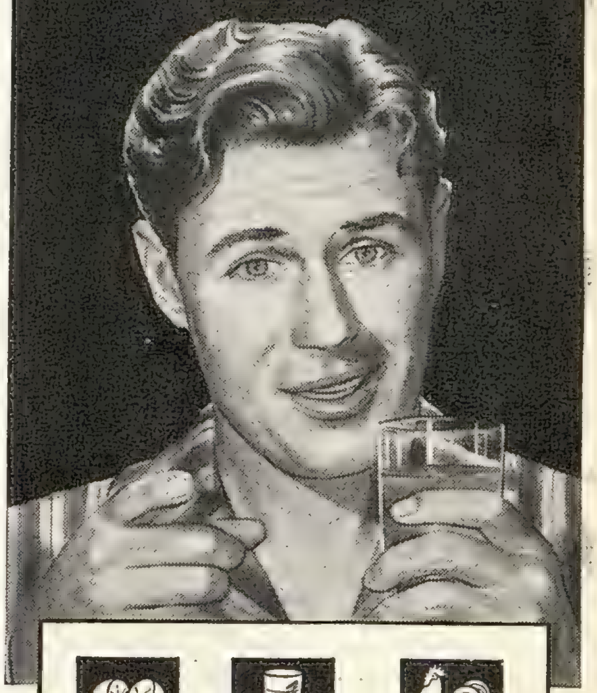
Written by **LAWRENCE LARIAR**
Illustrated by **DONLOU**


YOU MEAN YOU AND OZZIE HAVEN'T COME TO TERMS YET ?
SURE, I CAME TO TERMS--**HIS**! THE LITTLE BRAT !
YOU PROBABLY DON'T UNDERSTAND THE LAD, THROPP. NOW IF I WERE HIS FATHER--
IF YOU WERE HIS FATHER YOU WOULDN'T HAVE LIVED SO LONG !
A BEAUTIFUL FOUNTAIN ! WHEN WILL IT BE FINISHED, OLAF ?
I CANNOT FINISHING UNTIL OZZIE STOP CRAZY TALK !
GO AHEAD, JUDGE--TRY TREATING HIM LIKE AN ADULT !
I TELL YOU IT SHOULD BE WHITE !
AND I SAY YOU'RE DEMENTED !
WHY NOT COMPROMISE AND MAKE IT GRAY ?
THAT'S O.K. WITH ME ! WHAT DO YOU SAY, OZ ?
I SAY SUCH A COMPROMISE IS INANE, RIDICULOUS, IMPRACTICAL, ASININE, AND--
--AND **INFANTILE** !
INFANTILE ? WHY, YOU LITTLE PIP-SQUEAK !
EASY, JUDGE! REMEMBER--TREAT HIM LIKE AN ADULT !

Continued next week

Bet you don't need a Harsh laxative

Try Lemon and Water —it's good for you!



JUICE OF ONE LEMON | IN A GLASS OF WATER | FIRST THING ON ARISING

Lemon and water, when taken first thing on arising, makes harsh laxatives entirely unnecessary for most people.

This natural fruit drink — simply the juice of a lemon in a glass of water when you first get up—is all that most people need to insure prompt, gentle, *normal* elimination.

And unlike harsh laxatives, which irritate the system and impair nutrition, lemon and water is *good* for you!

Millions Take Lemons for Health
Lemons are among the richest sources of vitamin C, which restores energy, helps you resist colds and infection. They supply valuable amounts of B_1 and P. They alkalinize. They aid appetite and digestion. National surveys show 10,500,000 now take lemon and water as a regulator or health builder.

Not sharp or sour, lemon and water has only enough tang to be refreshing: clears your mouth, wakes you up. Try it for 10 mornings, first thing on arising.

Keep regular the healthful way!

LEMON and WATER
—first thing on arising

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PREACHER OF THE WOODS

Continued from Page 23

division automatically is a member of the Brotherhood. There are branches all over the United States and, until the war, Swift says there were groups all over the world. A sailor who had been a Yosian one winter wrote that he had started clubs in China and Japan. Just how large the different Yosian groups are outside of New York, Swift does not know. Many flourish and fade, to be replaced by others. Take the Montana Big Timber Yosians. He received detailed notes of their activities for years. Subsequently he discovered that the Montana Big Timber Yosians consisted of the correspondent and her pony. Swift's files show that since 1922 there have been 200,000 registered Yosians.

Anyone may become a Yosian. In the Brotherhood itself there are no dues, costs, responsibilities. Neither are there social, religious, political, racial, or color lines. Swift says, "We have radicals, atheists, agnostics, and Buddhists," and in a semiannual news letter to all Yosians he writes, "everyone in the world is welcome as long as he practices simple friendliness, tolerance, clean behaviour, politeness, of speech and good manners." In these bulletins, which always include the Yosian Crèdo, beginning, "We are brothers of the wind, rain, the golden sunlight, and the dewy night," he stresses that his walks are isles of safety and that when anyone insists on talking politics, economics, or other mutually banned subjects, walkers should give "him the silent treatment and walk away and find more lovable folk to walk and talk with." He boasts that after Yosians voted in the last momentous national election, they spent the rest of the day in the open without for a moment discussing the fate of their choice.

ALTHOUGH Swift lives in mortal dread of a scandal developing on Yosian walks, he reminds you that "No one's ever been found murdered or torn to pieces." He says, "there's something antiseptic about the outdoors." He admits that some couples are more interested in holding hands than learning the difference between a frog and a toad, but he always warns his followers, especially girls, not to give their telephone numbers to chance acquaintances. These admonitions notwithstanding, romance flourishes on Yosian tours and Swift figures he has been invited to more than 350 weddings. The couples now bring their children on the walks.

Probably the greatest crisis in the history of Yosianism took place in 1931 when the Scripps-Howard interests bought the World. Swift and his column were not included in the deal, more through oversight, perhaps, than premeditation. For days the World-Telegram switchboard was clogged with desperate Yosians complaining in a most unphilosophic manner. Finally, when Lee B. Wood, executive editor, found himself unable to get a call through in less than five minutes, he wired Swift to report for work immediately. Whereupon the leaders of the various Yosian groups adopted a resolution stating that "We the city leaders of the Yosian Brotherhood do pledge ourselves to urge all members to patronize the advertisers of the World-Telegram."

How much, in round figures, Swift means to the paper as a circulation builder no one knows. News Outside the Door, one of the oldest features in New York journalism, appears daily on the editorial page and on Fridays under such intriguing headlines as Yosians Will Make Pilgrimage to Apollo's Grave, or Yosians Will Greet Spring in the Open. The World-Telegram prints about two columns of agate type listing the various groups' activities for the week-end. The Yosians are obliged to buy the paper to find out where they are going to be on Saturdays and Sundays, and since new Yosians are constantly popping up, the idea does make for readership. As one World-Telegram executive philosophizes, "It's different and it's sort of a public service. It gets people out into the fresh air."

Johnny Roventini, the midget featured in all Philip Morris cigarette advertising ("Call for Philip Morris") is insured for $100,000 against growing an inch.
—*Lawrence H. Singer.*

Yosians themselves, who in many cases are lonely people in search of friendship, regard Swift with a reverence generally reserved for such therapists as Father Divine, Mr. Anthony, and the family physician. They shower him with little tokens of appreciation, usually at Christmas. Several years ago, when he was ill with pneumonia as a result of "sitting with my back to the ocean" at a Brotherhood campfire on the Long Island dunes, 200 Yosians paraded weekly from New York to the hospital at Hastings on Hudson.

Josiah Otis Swift was born in 1871 in an old farmhouse at Farmington Falls, Maine. He was born in the parlor, also the pressroom for his grandfather's weekly newspaper, the Farmington Chronicle, thereby fixing his journalistic star. His grandfather also may be credited with Swift's love for the woodlands. A Free Baptist preacher, as well as the village carpenter, the elder Swift enjoyed taking his grandchild on walks in the woods.

Except for about two or three years of formal schooling, whatever education Swift picked up in his childhood was from his Grandfather

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Herbal Laxative

Swift, who delighted in reading to him from Virgil, the Bible, and Bulfinch's mythology. When Josiah was twelve, the family shifted to Lewiston and he was hired by the Lewiston Journal as a printer's devil. Six years later he became a reporter at eleven dollars a week. Among other things he wrote a bird column and stories about elves and gnomes. By 1900 he had married Daisy Peabody, was making eighteen dollars a week, and had accumulated a $400 debt. At this point he sent a batch of clippings to Don Seitz, then business manager of the World. Seitz offered him a job at thirty dollars a week and the Swifts left Maine.

The World was well staffed and pretty fast company for the erstwhile Lewiston ace. But he was willing and earnest and a handy man to have around. Where Swift really enjoyed unrivaled glory was on nature stories and as a reporter of the era's bunion derbies. In 1910, when the great heel-and-toe artist, the late Edward Payson Weston, hiked from San Francisco to New York, Swift greeted him at Poughkeepsie and escorted him to Yonkers, a distance of fifty-three miles, in one day. With Rosalie Jones, the celebrated suffragette, he twice walked from New York to Albany when she was crusading for the cause.

Now he contents himself with his week-end hikes and fifteen-mile strolls once or twice a week.

He attributes much of his success as a nature philosopher to Mrs. Swift, "who could identify all the birds of Maine by their call." Although she is no longer able to accompany him on Yosian walks, she continues to encourage him in what she calls "his great good work."

The Swift house in Hastings on Hudson, called Treetops, is set on the side of a cliff overlooking the river and is surrounded by an uncultivated garden full of wild plants, transplanted trees, and flowers gathered from all over the state. The Swifts prefer their garden to be on the rugged, rustic side so that animals and birds will feel at home.

SWIFT has never had much use for money—his current income is a little less than $100 a week—and he rarely turns in an expense bill to his employers. By thrift he has been able to send his two sons through college. Otis Peabody Swift, now in public relations, was formerly a magazine executive and later with UNRRA; and Norman, an erstwhile schoolteacher, is in the State Department.

As a companion hobby to his walks, Swift goes in for collecting. One of his most treasured relics is the skull of an Indian squaw—Mrs. Swift calls it "the woman in Mr. Swift's room."

He smokes a corncob pipe incessantly, doesn't mind taking a drink, and is satisfied that he has rendered philanthropic service to his fellow men. He told a friend recently, "I expect to walk until I die."

THE END

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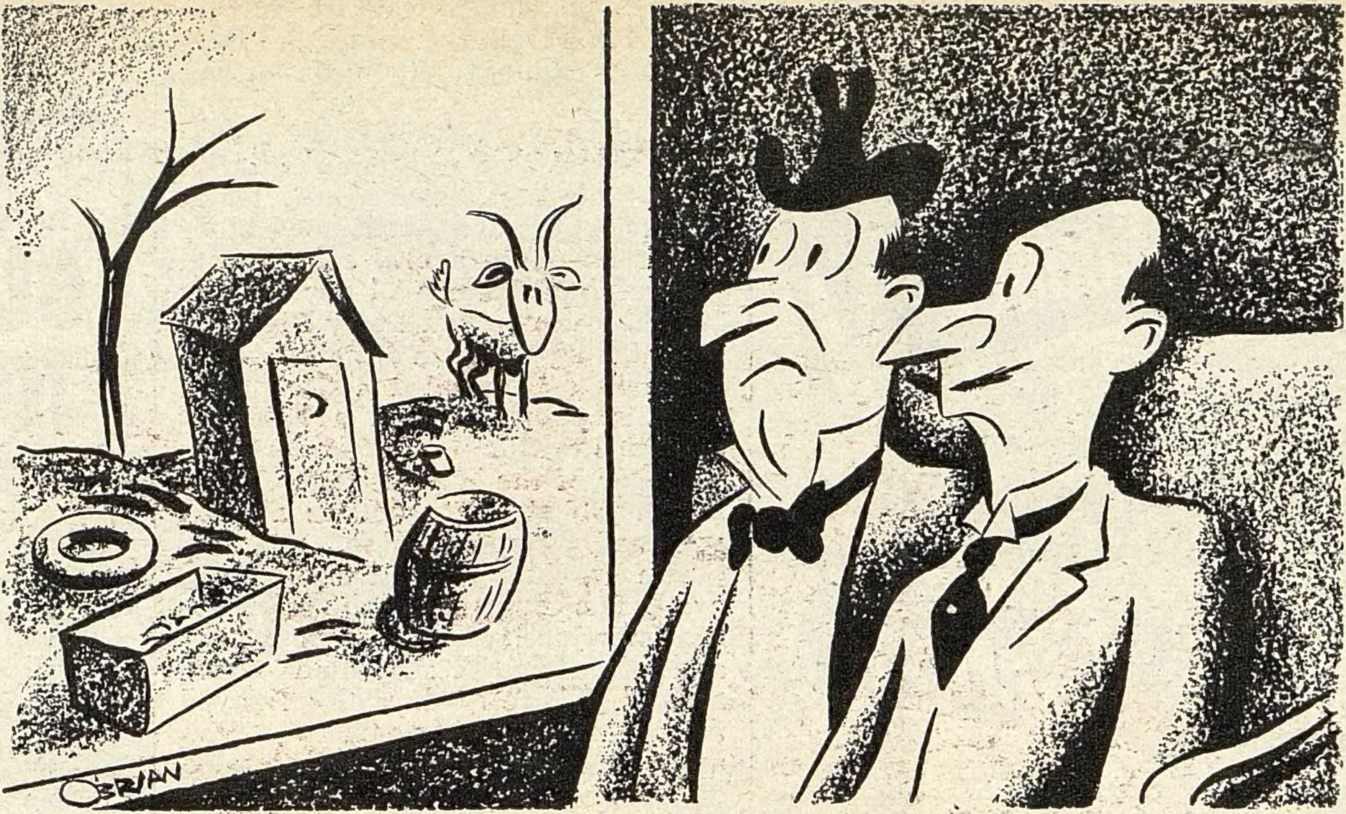
APRIL 20, 1946

PAUL HUNTER
Publisher
EDWARD MAHER
Editor



IS AMERICA REALLY THE BEAUTIFUL?

AMERICANS long have had the smug habit of regarding their country as God's country—a land of shining cities, tidy towns, neat farms, and smiling country lanes. This habit is ingrained most strongly in those substantial citizens who live "up on the hill" and never get around to seeing what their town really looks like.

However, the traveler who sees America out of a train window gets a far different picture of the country.

The face of America which the railroad traveler sees is admittedly not its best face; it is an extremely dirty one. Traditionally, in small towns and large, "down by the tracks" is the slum district. There are finer sections, well-kept streets, neat houses and lawns.

But what the visitor to our shores sees from train windows and what Americans themselves see when they ride the trains is a shame and disgrace.

Town after town rolls by seemingly composed of dilapidated shacks leaning crazily over squalid yards. Broken fences alternate with scattered junk piles; old bedsprings, broken bottles, cracked-up cars, heaps of rusty tin cans, mountains of miscellaneous refuse offend the eye and the spirit.

The onlooker wonders "Is this America the beautiful?"

The slovenly condition into which we allow our cities, towns, villages, and countrysides to fall is inexcusable. The disintegrating houses would improve mightily with a few lengths of siding, a yard or two of roofing, and, most badly needed of all, paint and a little elbow grease. The fences could be mended any Saturday afternoon in a few hours' work with hammer and nails. The yards full of busted furniture and other junk could be easily cleaned up and still more easily kept clean.

We beat our breasts about civic pride, and yet few American communities have found a solution to the problem of refuse and garbage disposal other than dumping it at the edge of town. There it becomes a breeding place for rats and other vermin and an offense to the eyes and the nose.

Occasionally a community will stage a "Clean up our city" drive. How effective these are is doubtful, to say the least. The continued prevalence of the dirt and junk indicates that these sporadic efforts seldom get farther than high-sounding resolutions at Kiwanis and Lions' Club luncheons.

What is needed is a nation-wide rebirth of national self-respect and pride in America and the way it looks. We are the most prosperous nation on earth. Curiously enough, it is our very prosperity which makes it more difficult for us to keep neat.

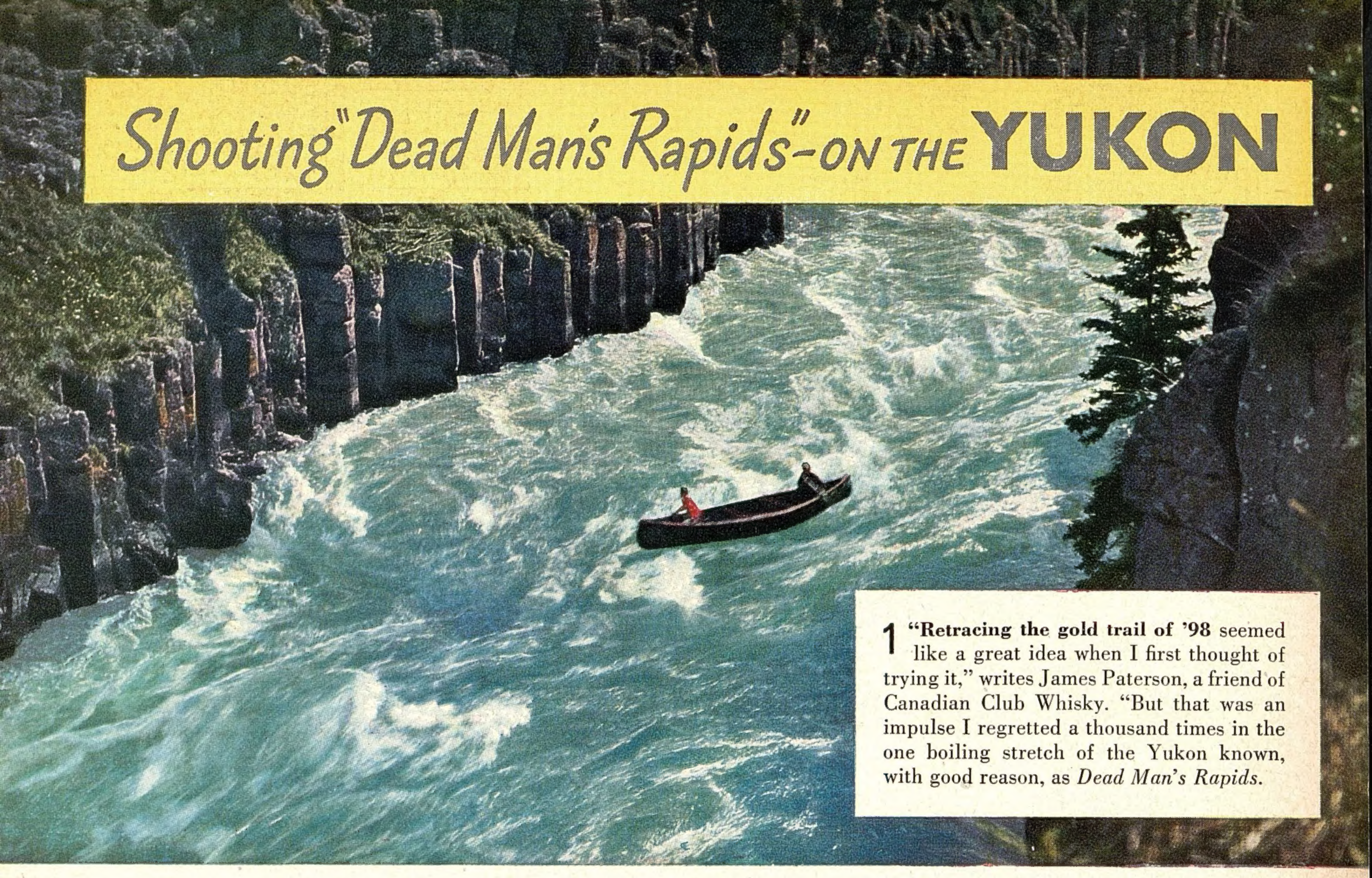
In poorer lands little or nothing goes to waste or is discarded. A use is found for almost every kind of material.

In America we can afford to throw things away, and we have the bad habit of doing it in the most convenient spot. As long as we are rich enough to discard such piles of junk we should go a bit further and do it so it will not reflect adversely on our housekeeping. The times demand that we take pride in America. Every community, small and large, should resolve to clean itself up so that this pride can be sustained.

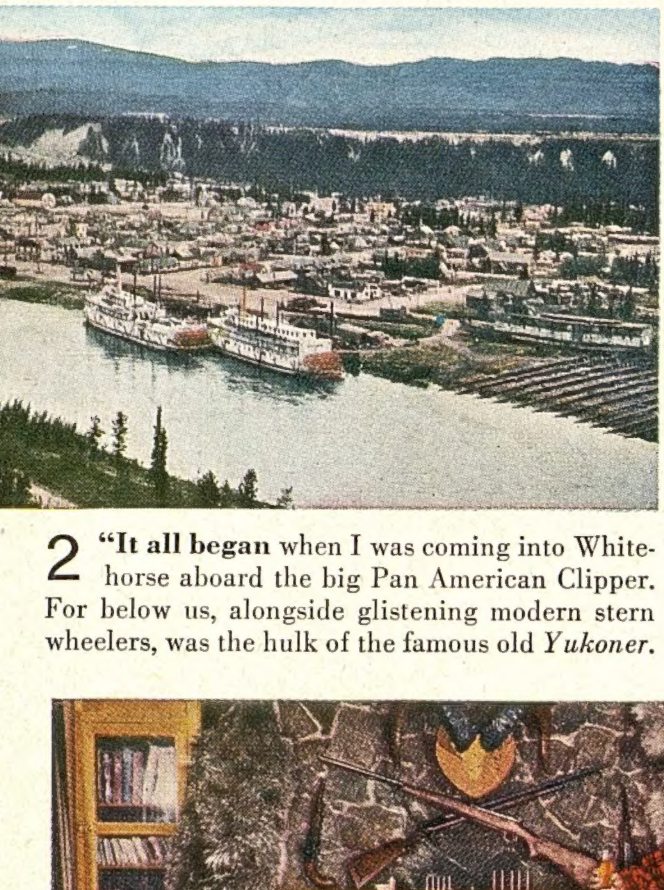
Paul Hunter

Liberty
... FOR ALL

Shooting "Dead Man's Rapids"-ON THE YUKON



1 **"Retracing the gold trail of '98** seemed like a great idea when I first thought of trying it," writes James Paterson, a friend of Canadian Club Whisky. "But that was an impulse I regretted a thousand times in the one boiling stretch of the Yukon known, with good reason, as *Dead Man's Rapids.*



2 **"It all began** when I was coming into Whitehorse aboard the big Pan American Clipper. For below us, alongside glistening modern stern wheelers, was the hulk of the famous old *Yukoner.*

3 **"Visiting the sorry** remains of this once palatial vessel, it was easy to visualize the hordes that once trod her decks—men frenzied with the hope of riches, and others whose hopes had been fulfilled.

4 **"Later that day,** during a tractor tour o the Alcan highway, my romancing over th glamor of those old times led me to accept a dar to try the toughest part of the gold-seeker's trai

5 **"Well, we did it**—somehow—to the accompaniment of more thrills than I'd ever known. But the most *welcome* thrill came at my host's cabin back near town . . . a whisky whose unmistakable flavor identified it as—*Canadian Club!"*

Even these days travelers tell of being offered Canadian Club all over the earth—often from a cherished pre-war supply. And why this whisky's worldwide popularity? Canadian Club is *light* as scotch, *rich* as rye, *satisfying* as bourbon—yet there is no other whisky in all the world that tastes like Canadian Club. You can stay with Canadian Club all evening long—in cocktails before dinner and tall ones after. That's why Canadian Club is the largest-selling imported whisky in the United States.

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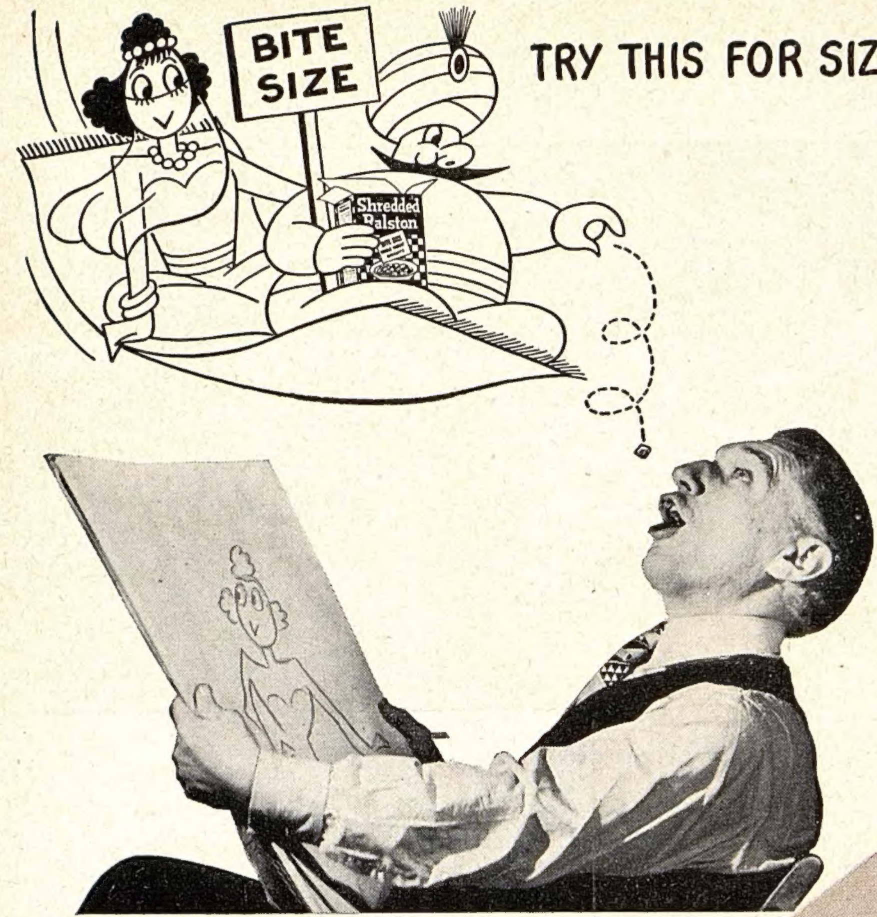
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